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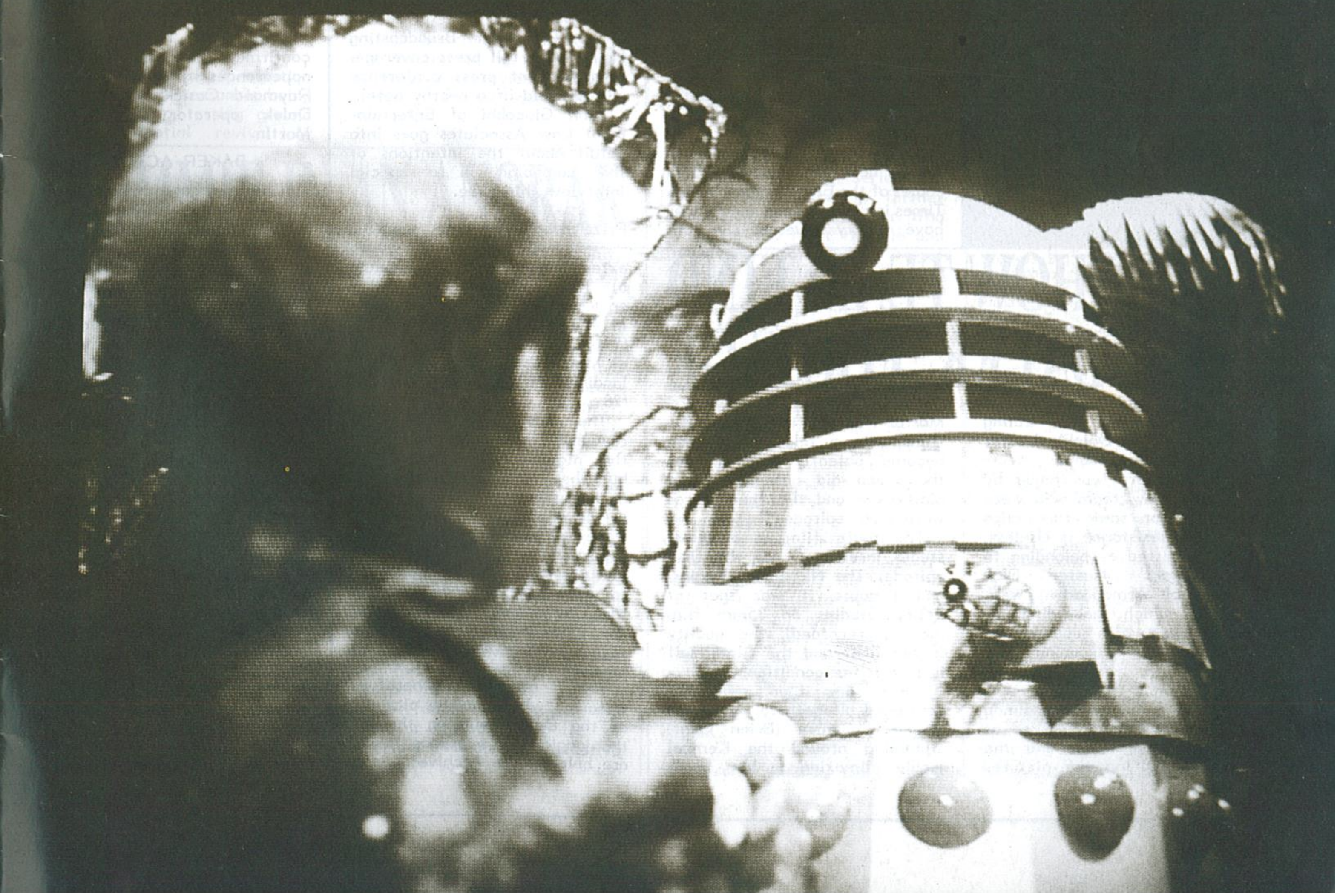
'DALEKS' MASTER PLAN'(1) FILM FOOTAGE FOUND!



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P.O.Box 1015, Brighton BN2 2YU

OVER THE YEARS there have been more hopes raised on falsehoods than facts as far as missing 'Doctor Who' episodes are concerned, but it has always been our priority to keep our readers informed of all developments as we hear them.

This time we are confidently predicting that by next issue, or DWB#100, we will have at least one 'missing' episode to report as being safely recovered and en route back to the BBC Archives. Whatever the case, only one month into 1992 and already the hopes of recovering at least one episode (possibly more) have never been more optimistic

Fingers crossed... GARY

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FAN: One page(A4 camera ready)£110; ½ page(130 x 390 / 270 x 195mm)£55; ¼ page(130 x 195 / 61 x 390mm)£27.50; Eighth page(65 x 195/130 x 95mm)£13.75

NEW CATEGORY: Small Ads (see page 8). Maximum 50 words per ad. £6.50

COMMERCIAL: One page(£140); Half page(£70); Quarter page(£35); Eighth page(£17.50).

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CREGREEN BACKS DOWN OVER JANUARY BITEBACK

A TEMPORARY SETBACK for the 'Save the Doctor' campaign occurred when Peter Cregeen recently reneged on his agreement to face the fans on the independently-produced Bite Back programme.

Originally planned to air on BBC1 on January 12th, TV coverage of the campaign has been delayed yet again, and a slot is now being considered for February's edition. BBC1 Head of Series Cregeen initially agreed to participate in a head-on confrontation with leading fan Jeremy Bentham over the fate of **Doctor Who** in the 10-minute "hot-seat" slot which gives the public access to reply from a BBC executive, but, as Bentham explained, "How can you argue with someone who's not there!"

While the refusal of apparently all BBC executives to face the fans over **Doctor Who**'s future is clearly making themselves unanswerable to their licence payers and will only add fuel to the campaign, an alternative format for putting forward the consortium's viewpoint is being developed.

Meanwhile the campaign is progresssing smoothly with entries to the prize draw competition growing as quickly as the prize list itself!

EXCLUSIVE VAROS OUTTAKES

The major new addition is an unedited version of the complete recorded material from the 1985 story **Vengeance on Varos,** containing 25 minutes of footage that never made it to the screen and which is no longer held at the BBC. Fifty copies of the **Five Doctors** Radio Times issue have been donated, as have twenty issues of the 20th Anniversary Radio Times Special, thereby vastly increasingly the chances of winning a prize from the draw to be undertaken this Easter. Twenty assorted scripts - including Malcolm Hulke's rehearsal script for episode 10 of **The War Games** - plus the original studio floor plans for **The Daleks** and **The Gunfighters,** two complete sets of Myth Maker tapes, two complete sets of currently available DWBs and an FX designer's prototype model of a white/gold Dalek from **Revelation** have also been donated. Together with the existing prizes that include two original Cybermen helmets, these prizes alone make the competition worth entering, but don't forget that your money will be used solely to help secure a healthy future for **Doctor Who.**

SAVE THE DOCTOR LTD.

A limited company has been established as a vehicle through which the legal action against the BBC will be conducted. The company has purchased its own TV licence as its "cause of action" against the BBC since, under the terms of its Charter, the Corporation owes various obligations to **all** TV licence holders.

When the writ is served to the BBC, it will be presented by **a Dalek** at **Broadcasting House** with full press coverage. A subsequent press conference will be held at a nearby hotel.

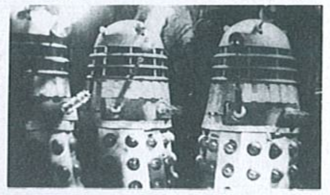
John Giacobbi of Entertainment Law Associates goes into detail about the intentions of the campaign in a special interview this issue.

Prize competition form - page 5...

VIDEO NEWS

A DALEK TAPE is currently being put together by John Nathan-Turner for release some time this year by BBC Video.

As with the Hartnell and Troughton Years tapes, it will comprise episodes from incomplete Dalek stories, namely **Daleks' Master Plan** 5 and 10 and **The Evil of the Daleks** 2, together with surviving clips such as the Daleks burning their way through the Kembel jungle from **Master Plan** 2 (this clip as reported has been mislaid and will have to be obtained from a private collection), the Daleks streaming out of their capsule at the end of **The Power of the Daleks** 5 and presumably the recently recovered **Master Plan** 1 film footage. As a novelty, two trailers shot specially during filming of **The Dalek Invasion of Earth** (approximately 10 and 15 seconds duration) to promote the story in the week prior to its transmission have been obtained for inclusion, depicting the Daleks milling about Trafalgar Square.



A presenter has yet to be confirmed, but there will be appearances by Dalek designer Raymond Cusick and prolific Dalek operator John Scott Martin.

BAKER ACTIVE

The much-mooted Shada tape is still being considered for release by BBC Video, with all existing material currently being viewed. Tom Baker will be approached to provide the links should BBC Video decide that it would be a financially viable venture.

Tom Baker recorded the links for his Baker Years tape in mid-January, but speculation surrounds exactly what his selection will include.

Baker's recently increased involvement with **Who**-related activities is certainly very pleasing, not least his participation on **The Evil of the Daleks** audio tape. All three releases in this BBC Radio Collection - **The Macra Terror, The Evil of the Daleks** and **The Tomb of the Cybermen** - will be available this summer, probably July, as two-tape packs retailing at around £7.15 each. It is hopeful that original complete off-air versions devoid of narration could follow.

LATE SHOW TEAM FIND LOST DALEK FOOTAGE

OVER 100 SECONDS of the footage filmed at Ealing Studios for 'The Dalek's Master Plan' 1 has been found!

The discovery was made by the Late Show team who were searching for some rare clips to use in **Resistance is Useless,** and clips listed as belonging to **The Daleks' Master Plan** 2 (**Day of Armageddon**) were ordered, which according to fan listings were supposed to be of the Daleks burning their way through the jungle on Kembel. The film duly arrived in two cans, the first containing the soundtrack film (marked as **Day of Armageddon**) and the second containing the pictures (marked only as **The Daleks' Master Plan**). After loading the films onto a telecine, it soon became patently obvious that the sound did not match the pictures - and that the pictures were from episode **1**!

The mute film is a 35mm studio insert roll for the first episode, **The Nightmare Begins,** and because it was shot at Ealing Studios on 35mm film (not telerecorded), the quality is excellent and the film itself is in pristine condition.

There are four sequences contained altogether:

a) Kert Gantry (Brian Cant) stumbling around the Kembel jungle climaxing in him being exterminated by a Dalek (54 secs)
b) The TARDIS materialising on Kembel (12 secs),
c) A starfield or lights overlay (9 secs), and
d) Mavic Chen's Spar spaceship landing at the Dalek base (28 secs).

The BBC Archives later revealed that they had held the pictures for some time, but they had been mislabelled as belonging to episode 2. This seems to have occurred because whoever had catalogued them apparently assumed that the pictures and the sound belonged to the same episode because they were both approximately the same length (and only the sound had an episode title to identify it).

The question therefore arises: **where** are the pictures of the Daleks burning through the jungle that everyone thinks are held by the Archives...

MIND ROBBER SELECTED FOR TROUGHTON REPEAT

THE MIND ROBBER has been selected as the Patrick Troughton instalment for the current BBC2 repeat season - thanks to active DWB readers!

The Late Show team in charge of compiling the season are utilising the results of our recent **Doctor Who** Series Survey to gauge the popular tastes of fandom - and when they realised how unpopular JNT's **The Krotons** nomination was, promptly dropped it from their shortlist! At the end of the day it was a choice between **The Mind Robber** and **The Seeds of Death** - the former winning becasue of its higher placing in the all-time classics!

The Jon Pertwee selection is far from decided, however, but the options are now much more wider as anything from a four to a six-parter can be shown. The most likely candidates at the moment are **Terror of the Autons, The Daemons, Day of the Daleks, The Sea Devils** and **Death to the Daleks.** As you can see there is also no restriction on stories that exist in a mixed format of black and white and colour episodes - a recent memo issued by BBC2 Controller Alan Yentob to the Late Show team simply instructs them to select **anything** that will pull in the highest ratings!

WHO ON 2? HOPES GROW

There is increasing speculation that the repeat season is being monitored as a testing ground for a potential revival of **Doctor Who** on what is being affectionately dubbed "the sci-fi channel". Certainly the first viewing figures are being awaited with much anticipation...

POWELL "FURIOUS"!

The repeat season was initially conceived **without** the knowledge of BBC1, who didn't hear of BBC2's 'brainwave' until late November at a scheduling conference at which the two stations got together to discuss their plans for the forthcoming post-Christmas and New Year winter season. On hearing of BBC2's intentions, it has been reported that BBC1 Controller Jonathan Powell visibly turned white with fury and shook with rage!

Only weeks later Powell took part in the BBC's annual PR exercise, See For Yourself, shown on January 5th and this year independently-produced by the Bite Back team yet still littered with half-baked distortions and downright lies on the part of the Beeb bosses. For example Powell, when asked to justify BBC1's alarming slump in its share of the audience since he took over from Grade, glibly retorted that BBC1 aims to cater for **all tastes and minorities** and so is not as ratings-conscious as its independent rival, ITV! (Anyone who taped this programme, please send in a transcript of his exact words as they will provide invaluable evidence in the case against the BBC).

BRUMMIE IN AN ANORAK

RESISTANCE IS USELESS provoked plenty of audience feedback following its transmission on January 3rd, with almost everyone praising the programme. Only one complaint was registered at the BBC Duty Office from a fan annoyed at the voice-over on the end credits of **The Time Meddler!**

The making of the documentary itself was fraught with problems, and on the evening preceding transmission it was discovered that it was four minutes **too long - after** the Late Show team thought that they had successfully completed it! Re-editing took place the following day, and it was not completed until 6.15pm - just 35 minutes before broadcast, leaving no time for a technical review. Thankfully, however, there were no evident hitches, although the recently-retrieved Kert Gantry footage from **Master Plan** 1 was a casualty of the editor's scissors.

PATRONISING

Overall, the documentary was well-received by fandom, although many were disappointed at the "patronising" anorak-with-a-West-Midlands aspect. The media, of course, is obsessed with creating stereotypical figures of fun, and presumably would like the public to think that all 'Whovians' dress and behave in such a way. In reality the majority of **Who** fans - as with Jews, Blacks, Moslems, gays etc. - are perfectly normal, well-adjusted and rational people, although I'm sure we've all seen or know of at least **one** fan as depicted in the documentary...

The 'anorak' provided the links for various categories of excerpts, each under imaginative banners such as "Fashion victims" (which showed an assortment of female companions distastefully attired) and "Effects (special)" which ranged from the cringingly embarrassing Loch Ness monster puppet from **Terror of the Zygons** (which was actually a rather fine story), to the splendid opening spaceship sequence from **Trial of a Time Lord** (which, conversely, was rather less so). The choice of clips throughout was varied, although perhaps too reliant on specific stories (i.e. **Invasion, The Three Doctors** and **The Ribos Operation**), with scant lip service paid to the '80s - only a couple of clips each for Davison, C.Baker and McCoy, who the producers felt were much fresher in people's minds. The best represented Doctor of all was Patrick Troughton, so who can argue?!

There were a couple of inconsistencies, such as what started off as a promising look through the Doctor's regenerations soon fizzled out when the Pertwee reneneration jumped to the Davison one full stop. Very clumsy and disappointing.

The documentary combined some of the cream of **Who** (the Cybermen marching down the steps of St.Paul's, the shop window/Autons coming to life, Tom Baker's "But do I have that right?" speech and arguably the all-time classic cliffhanger from **Androzani** 3) with the downright appalling (the Fish People on wires, Soldeed's death scene from **Nimon** and Bonnie Langford's squeaming at the Tetraps), all satisfyingly blended with strings of amusing clips such as one designed to illustrate the female assistant's prime function - to make the tea!

This divergence of excerpts exemplified the sheer variety of style that the series has encompassed, and further demonstrated that **Doctor Who** is by far the most flexible and therefore potentially most durable television concept yet dreamed up, and its return to our screens with new episodes long overdue!

It was somewhat disturbing to find Blue Peter - in its preview of the documentary the previous day - constantly referring to the series in the past tense and as a programme which "your mummies and daddies would have thrilled to in the '60s and '70s" while completely ignoring the '80s. Oh for the return of Biddy Baxter! Orders from above, perhaps, but at the end of the day the public were left to make their own minds up, and while they were no doubt entranced by the efforts of the Late Team in recapturing memories of a distant past, no doubt you and I could have done a whole lot better...

A personal view by Gary Leigh

BRIEFLY...

M O M I have confirmed the date on which the 'Doctor Who' exhibition will definitely be ending. It ends February 23rd, and the exhibition to replace it - 'Catching the Action: Muybridge and the Chronophotographers - commences on March 10th. Some props from the series will remain, and to mark the end of the exhibition a third weekend devoted to the topic - 'The Worlds of Doctor Who' - will be held over the weekend of February 15-16th. Organised by John Nathan-Turner and close friend Fiona Cumming, no advance details are being announced to avoid disappointing fans in case certain guests have to drop out - an attitude which most convention organisers - who bill guests sometimes as much as a year in advance of their events - would be wise to adopt. However we can reveal that Lorne Martin will be presenting a lecture on running the 'Doctor Who' exhibitions over the years.

MIDLANDS based 'The Whonatics' have disbanded following the decision of its four department heads who felt that it was time to move on to new projects in 1992. The group was formed four years ago by Simon Horton and gained something of a cult following and, at one stage, looked set to overtake the DWAS as the leading UK 'Who organisation.

In their place steps 'Whotopia' which was launched in January. Fronted by Ian Parkes and Gary Finney from Derby, the aims of the group is to "enhance 'Doctor Who's' reputation in the United Kingdom, to give its members the chance to meet guests from all aspects of the programme, to publish a quarterly magazine, to hold social and charity events and to have regular central meetings where fans can meet one another".

For more information on Whotopia, contact Ian Parkes at 47 Ridgeway Road, Stapenhill, Burton on Trent, Staffordshire DE15 9PZ.

Inferno is the name of a 'Doctor Who'/'Blake's 7' convention planned for Hallowe'en 1993 at the King's Manor Hotel in Edinburgh. For advance info, send an SAE to 5 Briery Bauks, Edinburgh EH8 9TE.

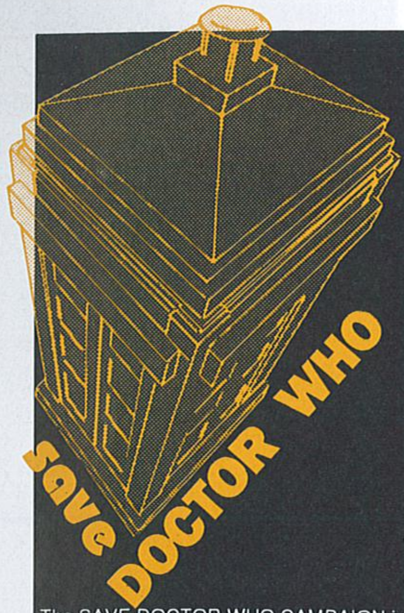
Phoenix, who had to postpone their anniversary convention last November due to another one-day event being held in Middlesex, have rescheduled for February 8th. Everyone who registered for the event will be admitted, and the details which appeared in their orginal advertisement in DWB#93 remain the same (apart from the date of course!).

GARY RUSSELL takes over from John Freeman as editor of DWM with issue 186. Nothing radically different or stunning is planned, he told DWB, and John Freeman will still be supervising the magazine while working on a brand new project for Marvel concerning the 'M.Y.S.T.E.C.H' orgainsation, "which could be a new 2000A.D.", he enthused optimistically. After three years with DWM Freeman felt that it was time for a change.

DOCTOR WHO AND THE SILURIANS and 'Warriors of the Deep' will be the August Target reprints.

AMERANG, who produce sci-fi assembly kits based on 'Thunderbirds', 'Rocketeer' and 'Alien', are branching into 'Doctor Who'. Plastic kits which will be far easier to assemble than the Severn models will be launched later this year at £19.99. A TV Dalek will be out in September followed by the film version in October and the Emperor Dalek in November.

BBC EMPLOYEE, magician Paul Daniels, launched an astonishing broadside on the BBC in The Daily Mail December 6, singling out Jonathan Powell, Alan Yentob and John Birt for special criticism of their policies. Just a week after the Wogan show was made a scapegoat for his failure to win ratings, Jonathan Powell defended his motives with the usual rhetoric.



December 1991

If a researcher was seeking a way of demographically presenting the state of "Doctor Who" at the end of 1991, he or she might easily end up with a visual aid looking like a 'Polo' mint. The circular ring would be the hive of activity currently going on around the show; the soaring video sales, the "New Adventure" books, all the successful conventions both here and overseas, work on the forthcoming audio tapes, and, of course, the record breaking exhibition at the London MOMI which still has queues around the block seven months after the event first opened.

The hole in the middle would represent the absence of the programme!

Despite some encouraging noises from BBC 2 and from the Corporation's own Children's Department, there is still no sign whatsoever of activity to bring back a new series. Worse still, the Corporation does not even want to enter into debate on the future of "Doctor Who", and has taken steps to suppress discussion on air. Originally Drama Head Peter Cregean was to have appeared on the BBC watchdog programme "Bite Back" to discuss "Doctor Who". But, since the screening of the pilot broadcast, he has pulled out, leaving the Producer of the show with a difficult problem. How can you mount a 15-minute debate when there is no-one to debate against? This is why "Doctor Who" did not make its scheduled appearance on that programme, nor in the December broadcast, and why it is doubtful for inclusion in the January edition.

The two letter-writing campaigns planned by the DWAS for November have also drawn a blank. Despite heavy responses not one letter about "Doctor Who" was read out on "Points of View", nor did anything appear in 'Radio Times' for the anniversary week of November 23rd. So where so we go from here?

The SAVE DOCTOR WHO CAMPAIGN is still very much alive and well and, thanks to your superb fund-raising responses so far to the competition, is ready to embark on the next stage of operations early in the new year: the serving of the writs.

So I would like to take this opportunity to answer some of your questions about the campaign, and its progress to date.

Firstly, "Who exactly is behind the SAVE DOCTOR WHO CAMPAIGN?" In all there are about a dozen people actively working on the campaign, including, on the fan side, myself, Gary Leigh, and several of the DWAS Exec. A few others have asked not to be named publically because of their professional or employee-based relationships with the BBC. However their contributions in the vital task of gathering documentary evidence are not to be under-estimated... Chairman of the committee is John Giacobbi of "Entertainment Law Associates", whose company will be handling the legal proceedings. "E.L.A"s address appears below and represents the headquarters of the campaign. Handling the all-important publicity aspects is "Maggie Farran Press", another professional company whose services will ensure coverage in the media of all proceedings and activities.

"What are the precise objectives of the legal campaign?" The target is simple; to get the BBC to agree either to make a new series of "Doctor Who" or to relinquish the product to another independent production company. Pressure to do this will come by applying the weight of the law, a measure which will ensure the BBC cannot just ignore this campaign. The law, however, deals in arguments, abstracts and precedents, so it would be very unwise at this stage to reveal the strategy "E.L.A." will be employing. Suffice to say for now, what has been so far revealed is only part of the whole picture.

"Who else is offering help and support?" Several publications and licensed product manufacturers have given information and statistical data. Overseas fan clubs are co-ordinating their fund-raising at a local level to cut down on the costs of converting their dollar cheques into stirling before despatch to England. The names of Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks are widely known as supporters of the campaign, but to this list can now be added that of Directing supremo GRAEME HARPER, who has donated some items as prizes for the competition.

"And what are the prizes?"I thought no-one would ask! To date prizes include;–

- **A Cyberman helmet ("Moonbase")**
- **A Cyberman helmet ("Earthshock")**
- **Malcolm Hulke's ep.10 rehearsal script ("War Games")**
- **Christopher Barry's Studio Floor plan ("The Daleks")**
- **Barry Newbery's Studio Floor plan ("The Gunfighters")**
- **Maldak's Keys ("Vengeance on Varos")**
- **Time Lord skull-cap ("Invasion of Time")**
- **A Marshman foot ("Full Circle")**
- **FX Designer's prototype model of white/gold Dalek ("Revelation...")**
- **RADIO TIMES 10th Anniversary Special – mint.**
- **Copies of the 1983 RADIO TIMES issue for "The Five Doctors"**
- **A full set of "Myth Makers" tapes**
- **Plus many more items...**

And as top prize, a full print of "Vengeance on Varos" with 25 minutes of extra footage, never broadcast on TV. This footage is unique and is no longer held by the BBC who have since wiped their master tapes of that show.

Brave Heart Everyone
& Keep those Competition Enteries coming!!

Jeremy Bentham
Spokesman/Treasurer
DR WHO Action Committee

Ian Wheeler, Cumbria (18-12-91)
I AGREE WHOLEHEARTEDLY with the views expressed by Ian Levine in DWB#97.

Doctor Who should be a living television programme rather than just a series of books and a fond memory. As Jeremy Bentham has said, the programme can be just as good as ever before and we should damn well stand up and fight for it. OK, there are more important things in life, but what's wrong with supporting a popular series which has found a place in the hearts of millions? Nothing at all, so let's take on the BBC on their own terms and get Doctor Who back where it belongs - on prime time BBC1.

Having said that, it must be universally agreed that BBC2 has done us proud. Nice one, Alan. I couldn't believe my eyes when I opened the Radio Times, especially as the Christmas edition is usually full of rubbish. This is not just a half-hearted attempt to keep Who fans happy, but is a well-thought-out retrospective season with careful consideration given to the time slot and even a special documentary to get things started. This could well be the most enjoyable - and perhaps most highly-rated - batch of Who stories for some years...

As a final comment, I would like to point out that the cartoon accompanying my Dan Dare article in DWB#97 is copyright Fleetway Publications who kindly gave permission for its use, and was drawn by David Pugh.

Matthew Quinsee, Northants (10-12-91)
With regards the campaign to sue the BBC, it's about time that they were made to answer to the licence payers. After all, it's us they make the programmes for so they should at least make something that we want to watch.

M.MacLochlainn (DWB#96, letters) seems to think the same as Paul Mount in Starburst (i.e. if the action is successful then many other series will be brought back). This is not correct. After all, how many fans of Waggoners Walk are there who are prepared to sue the BBC?

In answer to Andy Kent's "Get a life" statement, I happen to have a life besides Doctor Who. In fact I'm also concerned about the right of access to country lands for walks and many other things as well, but I still don't see why we should let the BBC decide what we can or cannot watch. After all, without the licence fee the BBC would not exist so we should have some say in the way they spend our money.

Stu Price, Liverpool (27-11-91)
Thanks for another thought-provoking issue (DWB#96). As soon as I read the details of the "Save the Doctor" competition, a cheque was hurriedly scribbled out and sent. Let's just hope that other fans get off their backsides and actually do something! This has got to be the most important event ever in the history of Who. We have been far too soft on Powell and Cregeen. The letter writing and Day of Action campaigns met with silence so now maybe the thought of a court case will prove more effective.

There were some real eye-openers in the Doctor Who Series Survey Results. Nathan-Turner. Well, what can I say? I can't. The great world of Who fandom and you, Gary, have said it all. 72% (not forgetting the ½) for least favourite producer ever. That certainly made my day without a doubt, and to top it off your spot-on comment, which I quote: "As he pathetically clings onto the last vestiges of the series...etc." Brilliant! Now maybe the man will take the message and get lost once and for all!

Ian Bridge, Stockport (23-12-91)
I find it remarkably smug what Tim Munro had to say in DWB#96, namely that we should all accept that there is really nothing that anybody can do to make the BBC bring back Doctor Who in a new series. It is very easy to criticise others' efforts while we sit on our arses and do nothing. If not for the efforts of those who fought for the programme in 1985, there would probably have been another television series thrown on the scrapheap of so-called tied, spent shows. Along with it interest in fandom would have waned and fanzine coverage curtailed.

If everybody takes Mr. Munro's advice of do nothing, then the BBC could easily believe that the lack of interest now being shown by so-called fans of the programme reiterates their stance of dropping it altogether.

My advice to all you fans out there is pull together and enter into this campaign to show the BBC that we are at least united in the cause of returning Doctor Who back to our screens in a suitable time slot.

John Ross, Renfrewshire (28-11-91)
I found myself immensely enlightened by Tim Munro's article on The New Fandom.

To my shame I had not previously realised that the stauch, real Doctor Who fans were such a joy-filled gang of bohemian rapscallions pirouetting gleefully through a wonderland of inspirational creativity. I shudder at my ignorance of the celestial transcendence conferred upon the "Tavern crowd". Their very name rolls off the tongue with rapturous nepotism, does it not?

I would suggest to Mr. Munro that he take a swift trip into the real world, though this may prove somewhat difficult as he obviously doesn't visit it very often.

Martin Rogerson, Fife (26-11-91)
Firstly, let me say how much I enjoyed reading DWB#96. I wish I could believe that the BBC can be forced to bring back Doctor Who, but Barry Delve's remarks are probably true. However, I'm not completely pessimistic so I have sent two Target Who letters and I will enter the competition as I hope every fan will, if only to win one of the great prizes.

One of the main reasons I want Doctor Who back on our screens is that its absence has subjected us to a deluge of rubbish from the States. If Doctor Who is brought back then perhaps the BBC would cut down on the number of American sci-fi series it imports, although we are likely to be stuck with STTNG for a while. It's only a pity it wasn't made by the BBC as well as it would have been cancelled too!

Ian Knapper, N. Yorkshire (28-12-91)
Re: Giacobbi Urges Stronger Participation headline (DWB#97).

I don't wish to sound too cynical, but isn't it time we considered in who's pocket most of the £30,000 will end up? Also that person might not be totally convinced whether the legal action will be successful, so long as they are paid.

I don't want to put down fans who are actually getting off their backsides and doing something (on the contrary, I applaud them!), but in their enthusiasm we might be being led up the garden path (I hope I'm wrong). I'm by no means a legal expert, but £30,000 sounds like a lot of money to me to take an organisation - which is supposed to be publicly accountable anyway - to court. Compare it with the £12 it cost my council to take me to court over non-payment of the poll tax. Either our legal system is very unfair or somebody's getting a large cut of the £30,000 (both I suspect).

Despite the above, I will be sending my £10 off and I urge others to do the same. This is because I am a fan of Doctor Who and will do anything that has the remotest chance of bringing the best programme on British TV back.

Frank Band, Perthshire (18-11-91)
Thank you for DWB#96 which certainly gave me a lot to think about. DWB#95's news of the "Save the Doctor" campaign, along with DWB#96's editorial and campaign update, encouraged me to support this latest effort to bring back the series. On the other hand, Tim Munro's article voiced a lot of my own feelings about the current situation. I realised that I hadn't actually "missed" Doctor Who.

After all, my last impression of it was Season 26. I enjoy an intelligent script; a

>6

"SAVE THE DOCTOR" CAMPAIGN

GRAND PRIZE COMPETITION

How to enter

Imagine you have just been appointed as the new Producer of DOCTOR WHO. Your mandate is to put the show "back on the rails" with a 26 week season, turning out a high quality show that will restore DOCTOR WHO's status as a BBC "flagship programme". Set out below are nine factors vitally important to your achieving this objective. What you must do is place these factors in your own order of priority. If, for example, you believe the most important criteria to a successful new season is the choice of the lead actor to play the Doctor, put E in box number 1. If the least important, in your opinion, is lobbying for a good time slot for the new series, put A in box number 9.

The cost of your entry is £10.Make your cheque, crossed postal order or International Money Order (Pound sterling orders only please) payable to THE DOCTOR WHO RESTORATION FUND.

If you wish to submit more than one entry to the competition, you may do so by filling out some of the extra columns, but you must add an extra £10 for every additional column completed.

Then, as a tie-breaker, finish the sentence "DOCTOR WHO deserves to return because..." in no more than 25 words.

Fill out your name and address details and send the completed entry form, plus your payment, to SAVE THE DOCTOR CAMPAIGN, 13 NORTHFIELD ROAD, BOREHAM WOOD, HERTFORDSHIRE WD6 4AE, ENGLAND.

The closing date for this competition is FRIDAY APRIL 10th 1992.

Rules of the Competition

Judging will take place around Easter 1992. Winners will be those whose entries match the decision of the judges. In the event of there being more winners than prizes, judging will take place on the merits of the tie-breaker answer.

The winners will be notified by post shortly after. The Judges' decision is final.

This competition is not open to any of the organising members of the DOCTOR WHO ACTION COMMITTEE.

A periodically updated list of the prizes available will be announced in the pages of DOCTOR WHO MONTHLY, DREAM WATCH BULLETIN, and other WHO-related publications.

The funds raised by this competition will be used wholly for the purposes of the SAVE THE DOCTOR CAMPAIGN in pressing the BBC to make new series of "Doctor Who". This is a non-profitmaking campain organised and administered by the DOCTOR WHO ACTION COMMITTEE. In the event of any residual money being left over on successful completion of the campaign, the remaining sum will be donated to the NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE for the preservation and restroration of vintage television.

Any enquiries about the competition or the status of the campaign must be accompanied by an SAE or 2 International Reply Coupons.

ENTER *TODAY*!!

1) Decide an order of priority for the following criteria of an incoming "Doctor Who" Producer;–

A) Lobbying for a good time slot.
B) Sound knowledge of the Special Effects field.
C) Appointing of good writers and Script-editor.
D) The importance of supporting cast and Guest Stars.
E) The need to balance the budget across the whole season.
F) Participation in the advertising and promation of the series.
G) Developing a format for "Doctor Who" in the Nineties.
H) Choosing the right actor to play the Doctor.
I) Appointing good Directors.

	ENTRY No. 1	ENTRY No. 2	ENTRY No. 3	ENTRY No. 4	ENTRY No. 5	ENTRY No. 6	ENTRY No. 7
1)							
2)							
3)							
4)							
5)							
6)							
7)							
8)							
9)							
	£10	£10	£10	£10	£10	£10	£10

Total no. of entries=
x £10 per entry
Total Amount enclosed =

2) Finish the following sentence in no more than 25 words;–

"Doctor Who" deserves to return in the Nineties because

3) Complete the following detials;–

Name
Address
Telephone number
zip/post code
Age (if under 16)
SIGNED (parent/Guardian if under 16)

4) Tear off and send Competition Entry Form, with your cheque payable to "THE DOCTOR WHO RESTORATION FUND", to;–

GRAND PRIZE COMPETITION
13 NORTHFIELD ROAD, BOREHAM WOOD,
HERTFORDSHIRE WD6 4AE,
ENGLAND.

well-structured and plotted story which comes to a satisfying conclusion/resolution. The last season's four stories had good ideas, good casts, good production values and a good Doctor and companion - but they were far from satisfying. No Season 27 means I don't have to watch another batch of good ideas go to waste.

Of course the series still has huge potential and I hope that, one day, the BBC or an independent production company will realise that potential. If the BBC, for whatever reason, don't want **Doctor Who** to be made just now, then I don't think there's much that fans can do to change their minds.

I **will** support this campaign, but I'm wary about how it will be represented in the press and by the BBC.

Nice to note from the David Jackson interview that BBC Video's policy is to bring out popular stories which people ask for...so why **Robot**? Your survey puts it at no.97 and I for one would rather see **Planet of Evil, Keeper of Traken** or another dozen stories before that one. OK, I'd be interested to see it again after all these years, but I don't think I'll be paying £10.99 for the privilege. Mind you, **Claws of Axos** is at no.119 in your survey and I **would** like to see it again as I really enjoyed it the first time around. Of course, being ten at the time, I doubtless didn't "appreciate" any dodgy CSO effects, etc. At least we'll at last get Roger Delgado's Master on video. He seemed such a serious threat to the Doctor in those days...

Keep up the good work - it's DWB, along with The Frame, the New Adventures books, the videos and the forthcoming audio releases that keep **Doctor Who** alive and kicking regardless of the lack of new TV stories.

John Grochowski, Illinois, USA (26-11-91)
I really enjoyed Tim Munro's article on The New Fandom, and I hope his optimism that **Doctor Who** eventually will return to the air as the BBC hierarchy turns over is not misplaced. I would like to point out, though, that Trekkers trying to keep the faith alive in the late '60s and early '70s had one bid advantage over **Who** fans trying to do the same in the '90s - that is, thanks to constant repeats, **Star Trek** never left the US airwaves.

In the years before **Trek** returned in motion pictures and finally in a new television series, repeats of the original series were making new fans all the time. The first repeats of **Trek** coincided with my university years, and I remember well packing our dormitory floor TV lounge on Sunday afternoons and how each episode was new to a majority of the students watching. New fans were made for eleven years before the first movie. Can the same happen in England with so few on-air repeats of **Doctor Who**? Will anyone who isn't already interested buy the videos, fanzines and comics? What will draw new fans?

Trek returned when there were so many fans that Paramount decided it probably would be profitable to make a motion picture. Even if **Doctor Who** somehow drew enough new fans while off the air to reach that profitable critical mass, would that be enough to inspire the BBC to take the series back into production? The BBC hasn't seemed to be swayed by the profitability of **Doctor Who** offshoots so far.

Christopher Wood, Hackney E9 (20-12-91)
Whilst I will be sending my £10 to the "Save the Doctor" campaign, I feel that even if the series does come back then it will be as a half-baked effort due to the fact that the BBC as a whole seems to be incapable of making quality television anymore.

The only way in which **Doctor Who** can return with a bang is under the wing of an independent company, but with BBC Enterprises calling the shots it's unlikely to happen. That's unless the company involved doesn't mind Powell and Co. creaming off the rewards of all of their hard work. Perhaps the campaign committee should be looking at a broader based action - perhaps the BBC could be sued under the trades descriptions act? "Sparkling entertainment"? I think not...

Turning to David Gibbs' review of **Logopolis** (DWB#97), he seems to be at a loss for words to explain what makes it such a classic. Perhaps it's a combination of the perfect Doctor, good script and direction and total absence of crap comedy guest stars? Or perhaps it's due to the fact that the BBC cared about **Who** in 1981.

Chris Petts, Selly Oak (29-10-91)
As much as I agree that the BBC should listen to the licence payers and cater for their needs, I feel that this action will only succeed in alienating **Doctor Who** fans in the eyes of the BBC and the press, who will only see this as a loony ploy by odd science fiction fans. The previous attempt at action in the form of the phone-in was also done with the aim of annoying the BBC by blocking their lines.

Surely what is needed is a show of support for the BBC and concern for the programme's future - not further destructive plots. What will this action give the fans? Would the BBC be forced to pay compensation to every fan, or to produce the programme by order of the High Court? (And if so, how would the programme return? The Doctor played by Timmy Mallett and the return of Mel?). The raffle for props from the series is a very cleverly engineered scheme, especially with the **Stop Press: Letters to the BBC are Binned** article closely following the raffle article in DWB#96. I hope that fans will look past this offer and see the possible consequences of this action before sending their money for tickets.

I suggest a well-organised campaign in the form of a demonstration outside BBC Television Centre, well publicised to the press **and to fans**, and not with the attempt to block access or harass entrants to the building, but simply to show that we care for the programme and are concerned for its future. I am certain that a crowd of hundreds of fans all giving support to the show - which could not be ignored in the same way as a letter-writing campaign or phone-in - would have more effect than a court case. By all means, if after such efforts the BBC still failed to respond, then more drastic action may be the last chance for the series, but please, a last concerted supportive effort first.

Vaughn Stanger, Wealdstone (13-11-91)
While I respect your reasons for urging fans to support the proposed legal action against the BBC, I find myself agreeing with Tim Munro's opinion that the proposed action may well prove futile and quite possibly counter-productive. I should make it clear that, unlike Tim, I support the principle of a campaign to bring back **Doctor Who.** If it does not return in the fairly near future, say two to three years, then I think that it is unlikely to return at all. The current dearth of new ideas for television programmes and the endless reuse of "old" formats is unlikely to continue ad infinitum, partly due to the impact of new, more interactive forms of mass-media technology, but also because of viewer boredom. In ten years time creativity and innovation could have returned to television - something to be devoutly wished for - and the prospect of reactivating old programmes may look very unattractive. Thus I will support any constructive campaign which aims to return **Doctor Who** to our screens in the near future, and indeed have written letters to the BBC urging them to do just this.

The problem is, what constitutes a "constructive" campaign? The proposed legal action and the Day of Action last year seem to me to be essentially negative responses which, moreover, have been formulated by an ad-hoc group of "senior" fans who are not directly accountable to fandom. There has been no general discussion of alternative strategies; we have merely been told what we should do if we are "true" fans of **Doctor Who.** I doubt that I am the only fan who disagrees fundamentally with the proposed action. I can only reiterate what Tim Munro said: even assuming that the legal action was successful, how could a court punish the BBC in such a way as to persuade them to make a new series of **Doctor Who**? Admonish the BBC for its incompetence and lack of accountability? This might influence the BBC's attitude in the future, but it offers little prospect of returning **Doctor Who** to our screens. I cannot imagine a judge instructing the BBC to do so, not least because of the precedent that would be set. Even if a suitably chastened BBC did decide to make **Doctor Who,** the result would probably be worse than Season 24; alternatively, the proposed animated series might put in an appearance. Let's face it: **Doctor Who** may have been important to the BBC ten years ago, but it isn't now. A humiliated BBC is not likely to produce a high quality product just to placate a few thousand fans. Surely any campaign should concentrate on establishing a constructive dialogue with the BBC rather than indulge in a slanging match. How else are we going to change the BBC's currently low opinion of **Doctor Who**?

I find it ironic that the first evidence of something which would help a constructive campaign is actually sitting on the back page of DWB#96, i.e. the competition form. If each fan filled in one form and the results were analysed, summarised and disseminated to the BBC, influential TV staff and "interested" independent production companies, I believe that fandom would have done **Doctor Who** a much greater service than by prosecuting the BBC.

I will be sending my completed form to the competition address in the hope that the organisers may use it constructively; they will be instructed not to use it in the competition. I will be donating the entrance fee directly to the National Film Archive.

Stuart Green, Devon (13-11-91)
Having just read DWB#96, I feel that you may have put a nail in your own coffin, so to speak. On reading your editorial you certainly made me feel that I really ought to send my £10 off, although I felt that the campaign stood only a slim chance of success. But if £10 isn't a lot to you it sure is to me and I'm sure a lot of other readers feel the same. The campaign has come at the worst possble time with this country in recession, unemployment and home repossessions growing and Christmas just weeks away as I write. I also note that my DWB subscription needs updating, and that's another £29. I can't afford to buy the latest **Doctor Who** video releases when they come out and have relied on birthdays and second hand shops for those.

The letters page started off expressing anti-support to the "competition" and then Tim Munro's piece put your "Save the Doctor" court case in a poor light. However, I think that DWB is to be commended in presenting both sides of the argument and it has certainly made me reassess the situation. It also made me put my priorities into perspective.

DWB#96 arrived through my letter box with the Children in Need edition of Radion Times. Now, if I was going to put £10 of my hard-earned cash to either the needs of sick children or to the needs of a sick programme, I know where my money would go.

Alan Hayes, Plumstead E18 (30-11-91)
Thank you for DWB#96 and the latest on the preposterous "Save the Doctor" campaign. It is a rare occasion indeed, these days, when I feel compelled to put pen to paper over **Doctor Who,** as, like Andy Kent (letters, DWB#95), I find the continual moaning about this and that quite tedious. However, recent developments in the campaign to return **Doctor Who** to our screens have left me quite amazed. I am not surprised at either your support of the action or of DWM's - it is within both your interests that the programme is back on air as soon as possible - but I cannot help but think that the condoning of such an inflammatory and threatening action is ultimately destructive rather than constructive. This ill-considered action will probably resign the programme to the shelf for ever... It will win neither the programme nor the fans any support at the BBC or in the national press. It appears to me that once again the majority of fandom is being misrepresented by the self-important, not to mention self-appointed few - this "Action Committee" sounds to me like an uncomfortable parallel of the DWAS executive - exactly how much say in its actions do we have? While I would like to see the programme back, I do not subscribe to the "Sue them!" attitude. Besides anything else, the legal case barely holds water and will be laughed out of court. It appears to advocate total democracy in programme making - a ludicrous notion which would do more damage than good. In that sort of system we would be watching the same programmes in twenty years time that we watch now and nothing new would surface. I imagine that once the "Action Committee" has forced the BBC to revive **Doctor Who** it will want to have script approval, casting control and the like: after all, it does seek democracy!

Also, having been a long-standing reader of DWB, I have followed your letters pages with interest and it has been very amusing to note that whilst the programme was in production, a high proportion of readers thought the programme was tired and should be axed. Now that the BBC have obliged, the letters pages are full with 'Shock, horror - it's been axed!'-style writings. Are DWB readers **never** satisfied?

D. Sumbler, Swindon (20-11-91)
I've just finished reading DWB#96. Tut! Tut! Another scathing editorial so soon! As one of the so-called "Apathetic Millions", I can only say he said it all, and so well too.

Who, I hear you cry, Gary? No, I talk of Tim Munro and his piece The New Fandom. Once again DWB covers the other argument, and so well too. Tim has stated many of my views in his article, better than I could have done. His comments on the Day of Action, the Beeb's lack of action, the reasons for not forcing the BBC to take action and this suing business are **spot on!**

So come on, fandom, this man talks sense - get a grip and let's get on with some constructive appreciation of **Doctor Who** and stop annoying the BBC. They may or may not make **Doctor Who** in the future, but not while they are being hounded by "the fans".

As far as I can see, the only people who will gain from the legal proceedings are the lawyers, and they are doing all right already. If you want to raise money for anything, do it for a worthy cause, O.K.?

Remember - it's only a TV programme.

Kate Orman, NSW Australia (10-12-91)
When I was younger, I used to watch The Rocky And Bullwinkle Show, and I adored it; it was hilarious. Just recently, the show has returned to Australian television. I **hate** it. It's not **funny.**

Obviously, Rockey and Bullwinkle haven't changed; I have. I'm older, my tastes are different. If I'd never seen R&B again, I would have gone on assuming it was wonderful.

Roger Shore (DWB#91) may be suffering from a case of Bullwinkle-itis. He grew up with the Pertwee and Bakers, that is, he saw those stories through the magic haze of childhood. He might get a nasty shock if and when his favourites are released on video! It's a shame that fans like Roger have lost their enjoyment of the show. But no matter. The overwhelming majority of fans (and may I remind you that at least forty thousand of us don't buy DWB) do approve of and like modern **Doctor Who** - and we **also** approve of and like older **Who.** Lucky us, eh? This is one of the reasons I don't support the suing of the BBC. "Poorly produced?" No - the show has been poorly supported, poorly advertised and poorly scheduled.

The legal action is extreme and bizarre, and - to borrow a phrase from the US Senate - tends to bring fandom into disrepute. Who are the "consortium"? Whose support do they have? What fans did they consult before initiating the action? Who gets the money if they win? There's no legal precedent - is there **any** relevant law at **all**?

Certainly the BBC should be pressured, but not in ways that will perpetuate the image of fandom as obsessive, petty and weird. If the action is successful, I will merrily eat my words. But all I can see happening is a widening of the deep schism between the fans and the BBC.

David Rasmussen, Oxford (20-12-91)
With regard to suing the BBC, I had come to much the same conclusions as Tim Munro does in his article, and while I accept that time is of the essence, I feel it would have been at least courtious to enter into some discussion with the readership before going ahead. I tend to agree with Colin Baker's view that the programme will return inspite of and not because of fan action, but then you can't just do nothing.

Generally your magazine is very good, and it's refreshing to see a magazine that is (usually) able to accept any criticism. The only changes that I would like to see incorporated would be, firstly, the inclusion of short pieces of fan fiction (along similar lines to DWM's Brief Encounters) and, secondly, a decent logo. The current one is really gross.

ED: As has been repeated ad nauseum in the past, there is absolutely no place for fan fiction in DWB - it would stick out like a sore thumb! And we certainly don't want to be accused of emulating the successful ideas of others... On the subject of the logo, yes, a completely new one has been commissioned and will debut with DWB#100...

Martin Dixon, Bradford (29-11-91)
So now it's "sue the BBC" to bring back **Doctor Who.** Just as before with the Day of Action, this latest episode has been forced upon fandom by a group of fans who believe that just because they want the programme back so does everybody else. Now fans everywhere are expected to pay their £10 to force the Beeb to bring **Who** back. For God's sake, if the BBC had intended to bring back **Doctor Who,** by now they would have done so. Days of Action and letter writing campaigns and anything else for that matter are not going to change their minds. The only thing this kind of behaviour does is to label all **Doctor Who** fans as "Spoon-fed drones" who can't survive without the programme!

I completely agree with Tim Munro's comments in DWB#96 about the **Doctor Who** junkie. We don't need the programme to continue enjoying **Doctor Who.** There's the videos, the New Adventures, fanzines and, of course, the excellent DWB. Surely by buying these products we are proving, if only to ourselves, that the programme is far from dead and only enjoying a small rest.

The BBC will bring back **Doctor Who,** I'm sure of it. It won't be now, due to the campaigns of certain members of fandom, but probably in about five or six years time when the BBC top brass are looking for a successful new formula to spearhead their new line-up for that autumn. This is when **Doctor Who's** heyday will come again, so just a little message to the fans out there who still want the programme back now: carry on campaigning if you want to, but leave out the fans who just want to enjoy **Doctor Who** by keeping it alive in their books, videos, fanzines and memories and await its inevitable return to our screens.

Rachel Hannan, Hants (23-11-91)
Many thanks for another excellent year of DWB, not an easy one due to lack of news on **Doctor Who.**

I completely agree with Tim Munro's sentiments and feel that the "Save the Doctor" campaign will do nothing for the future of **Doctor Who** and even less for the image of fandom in the eyes of the general public. No doubt I shall be branded one of the apathetic majority, but quite frankly there are far more deserving causes to put my energy and time into. I have no doubt that **Doctor Who** will return in some shape or form at some point in the future, even if it is five or ten years.

Paul Gibbons, Wigan (11-11-91)
After reading Jeremy Bentham's plea to all fans of **Doctor Who** to help fund the "Action Committee" (DWB#96) I was anxious to join in. I would like to thank Tim Munro for making me realise what a gross mistake I was about to make. His article - one of the most inspiring I have ever read - helped me to re-examine my ideas concerning the programme and to bring them into perspective. I have now ceased to worry about whether or not **Doctor Who** the television programme will be back on our screens in time for the thirtieth anniversary. I just could not give a damn anymore because **Doctor Who** is so much more than a TV show.

I am also ashamed that DWB is supporting DWAS's "Target **Who**" campaign which is wholly futile and negative. I wish there were more like Tim Munro on your production team.

John Connors, Liverpool (1-12-91)
"The most important editorial we're likely to read"? Come on, Gary, if you really believe that then it makes DWB an even worse offender than Bentham and company. I really think that fandom needs to get a grip on reality and think through the implications of this proposed court case logically, and resorting to emotional blackmail of the type seen in DWB#96 is no help to anyone.

Tim Munro's article highlights some of the reasons why, should such a case get to court, it stands little chance of winning. What concerns me more is the tactics used to try and raise the money. Young or impressionable fans are being led to believe thay by donating they are improving the chances of the BBC making **Doctor Who** again. Yet this is not true - their money will end up in some lawyer's already well-lined pockets (and there's no mention that the money will be returned if the case doesn't go ahead).

Gary's idea of giving up buying a video for one month is a sound one - and I would suggest that every DWB reader makes a £10 donation to one of the hundreds of charities who are crying out for generosity on such a concerted level, or is the question of bringing back a television series more important? I don't think so and I'd like to think that you don't either.

Finally, I, for one, believe **Doctor Who** will come back in a few year's time and then it'll have a chance to be hip and popular again, something which it hasn't been since the early '80s. In short, my message is to **get real.**

SHIFTING AUDIENCES

Edward Parsons, Stourbridge (9-10-91)
In a recent statement by the BBC, lack of good ratings was the reason given for **Doctor Who's** cancellation. In my view, the main reason behind the steady drop in ratings is the failure to attract a new generation of fans.

I became hooked on **Doctor Who** when I was four years old, watching such stories as **The Deadly Assassin.** The programme had everything a child could want - a highly appealing Doctor, easily identifiable monsters, lots of suspense, a little horror, but most of all stories that were easy to follow. Hardly any of the above have featured in **Doctor Who** in recent years, with only **The Curse of Fenric** coming anywhere near.

The rise in the schedules (5.15 to 7.30pm) mirrors the progress towards an older audience. This is the case in other areas too. Terrance Dicks' much maligned '70s novelisations were perfect for introducing your average six-year-old to the world of **Doctor Who.** Now it's your average fifteen-year-old Target are aiming at. Perfect if you happen to be fifteen, but not much good at 'recruiting' young fans. Gone are the comics, jigsaws and other affordable goodies. These days you need to take out a bank loan to afford **Doctor Who** merchandise.

The BBC have said that when/if **Doctor Who** returns, it is to contain more mystery and a darker side to the Doctor's character. I would like to see just the opposite. With Patrick Troughton the runaway winner with 6-12 year olds in DWM's poll (and Tom Baker second), surely this is the right direction to move in.

IS CLASSIC TROUGHTON OVERRATED?

Bryan Jenner, Calgary, Canada (23-11-91)
The 1991 Doctor Who Series Survey results are a farce. Three gone-forever Troughton stories in the top eight?! Season Five best season overall?! Come on! Fifty people out of how-many-thousand readers can land these stories on top because of something they saw a quarter-century ago? In courts of law, evidence is required to prove something. The evidence defending these stories is long gone. It may be noble to include all twenty-six seasons of **Who,** but it is impossible. I see one major reason for these 'incorrect' placings.

Namely, the memories have cheated. Now, before everyone yells "Ah, he's just saying what JNT tried to", the only reason I say this is because my memory has cheated me on occasion too. I had vague childhood memories of a 'terrifying' episode of **Space 1999** with some creature that hunted people down and burned them to death on a dark and creepy spaceship. Well, I saw **Dragon's Domain** again recently after a dozen years and I did not even flinch, and wondered how on earth I could have thought this was so scary and powerful. It wasn't anymore. I think the same thing has happened with the Troughton 'classics'. No one has seen these stories in nearly 25 years. The old Chinese whisper is at play. Things that were creepy back then are positively frightening now. Actors muffing lines are now speaking Shakespearean verse. Well, no. It's just a case of a child being scared by Troughton episodes not being scared by McCoy ones because he is an adult now.

The Dalek Invasion of Earth has slipped 35 positions since its release on video. One wonders how many positions the three Troughton episodes would fall if they were seen by all. I don't know; I have no idea how good they were.

*ED: Bryan certainly raises an interesting point for conjecture. Many of us were not even around when the "big three" - **The Evil of the Daleks, The Tomb of the Cybermen** and **The Web of Fear** - were transmitted, but certainly the recovery of **Evil 2** and **Web 1** were enough to indicate that these were indeed **Doctor Who** stories out of the ordinary. Things might be different if, one day, either of these stories can be seen in a complete form, but I for one am confident that these stories - along with **The Power of the Daleks** and **Fury from the Deep** - would live up to every ounce of hype that has surrounded them since the BBC's criminal purging of all **Doctor Who** episodes from this truly golden era. What do other fans who have not seen these stories think?*

Tony Lazarus, Barnstaple (1-10-91)
I have a theory as to how voting for favourite companions in your recent **Doctor Who** Series Survey went. For hetero male **Doctor Who** fans at least, your favourite assistant will be the female that was current when you hit puberty, and furthermore that this dictates your sexual preference for life. A straw poll of two fans confirms this - I was 11 in 1973 and prefer blondes (Jo Grant), my mate Kev was 11 in 1975 and prefers brunettes (Sarah Jane Smith)! This could also account for the preponderence of gay **Who**vians in their 30s, raised on the masterful Ian or the bit of Celtic rough that was Jamie, and the sprinkling of gay fans under 20 who had to choose in the '80s between, on the one hand, Adric and Turlough, and on the other hand Nyssa, Tegan, Peri and Ace. (I know a few metal freaks check for Kamelion!). We shall draw a veil over the horrible effect that Mel had, which has presumably yet to show itself. But I fear that, just as my generation was traumatised by (real) Cybermen, in a few years time a generation of school-leavers will be unable to stand the sound made by a Red Setter on heat, or indeed high-pitched noises of any kind...

!#"*§!

Matthew Smith, Hastings (24-12-91)
I'm glad to see that you've stopped editing out swear words. It's gratifying to know that I can now refer to **Genesys** as "teen-wank" (Anthony Brown, The Gallifrey Chronicles review, DWB#96) if I want to!

>15

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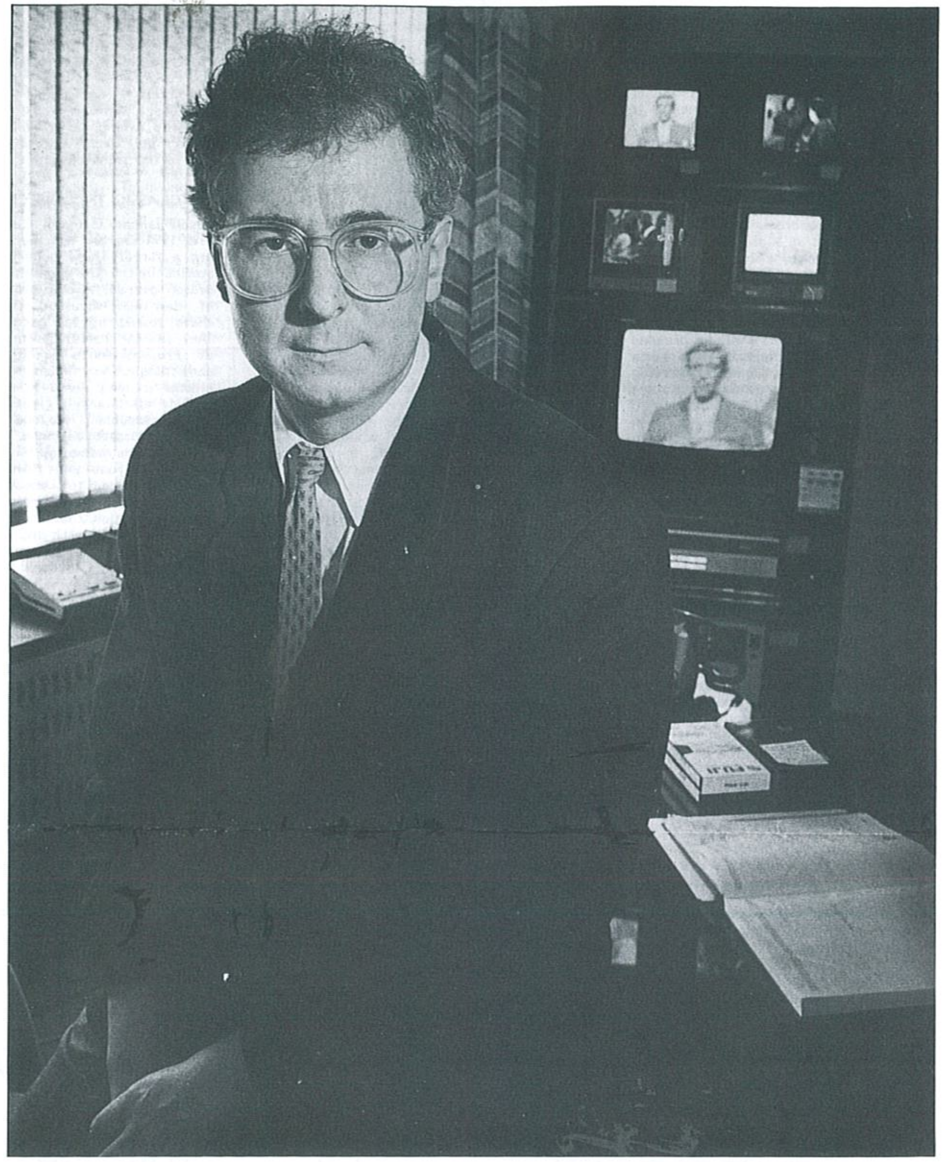
HE WHO WOULD BE GRADE

Anthony Brown examines how the machinations of the BBC's sixth floor to build bigger audiences have failed abysmally, due in no short measure to BBC1's controller, Jonathan Powell.



THE NEW SEASON'S been and gone. No, not the new Doctor Who season -- I'm talking about a wider television season, which should be of interest to all but the most blinkered of fans.

This autumn was a crucial one for the BBC. Old favourites, from Howard's Way to All Creatures Great and Small, which had been the bedrock of the schedule for years, were retired and replaced by series which the BBC hopes will run well into the nineties.

Trainer and The House of Eliott, placed at the centre of BBC1's 'classy' (according to Jonathan Powell, although how that description can be applied to Challenge Anneka escapes me) weekend schedules began by pulling in about 8 million viewers. That's a reasonable enough figure for a beginner, and should have been enough to ensure their survival. But I somehow doubt that -- although they've been renewed for another season in 1992 -- they'll be around in two years time. As Tim Munro pointed out in DWB 95, drama series have recently had a distressing tendency to die after two years. Campion, Rockcliffe's Babies, The Paradise Club, Casualty ... All of them ended after two seasons, though they'd clearly been intended to run longer.

But Casualty's been around for years, you cry. That's right, and it's now BBC1's biggest (only?) hit, once the soaps are forgotten -- indeed, we're now being threatened with its conversion into a soap! But it *was* cancelled after two seasons, only to be reprieved when the complaints of Tory MPs about its political bias meant that it had to survive if the BBC were not to be seen to be giving in to political pressure. (An important point there -- the fuss made by MPs over the axing of After Dark has made it impossible for Michael Grade to reverse his decision without losing face.)

Until its reprieve, Casualty's history had been identical to that of every other recent drama series. First, it was hyped to the skies. It was brilliant, we were told. It was so good that they were already making the second season. It was plugged for weeks in unending and unavoidable trailers which made you sick of it before the first episode was even shown. And then, it was watched by eight million people and the BBC, believing their own hype, were so disappointed that it hadn't shot to the top of the charts that they cancelled it before the second run was even shown.

Well, the BBC needs to learn that there's no longer such a thing as an instant hit. Well, actually there is, The Darling Buds of May proves that, but only in exceptional circumstances. Buds got 18 million from day one because of clever publicity which stressed the similarities between the wheeler-dealer persona of Pop Larkin and David Jason's other role, Del-Boy (as well as the obvious appeals of Catherine Zeta Jones), and succeeded in convincing the Only Fools and Horses audience that they could get more of their favourite series merely by changing channels -- the two were even shown in similar slots. But such opportunities are rare. Most of the time, the only way to get a hit is to work, and wait.

Ten years ago, scheduling was simple. People had little choice as to what they watched. Aside from the minority provision of BBC2, you watched either BBC1 or ITV, choosing the programme you liked most or, equally often, hated least. Because the BBC scheduled in 25 minute blocks and ITV, due to adverts, in 30 minute blocks, changing channels meant missing half of a programme nine times out of ten. As a result you tended to stick to one channel for most of the evening. Under those circumstances it was easy to get people to give a new series a try. They watched it because it was 'hammocked' between two series they liked, or because they preferred the unknown to the hated.

Now you really *have* to want to see something before you'll watch it. There are more channels available, including Sky and Channel 4. The BBC now runs on a half-hour schedule (on weekdays at least), allowing you to switch smoothly from Emmerdale to EastEnders to The Bill without missing anything. When there's a gap without anything you want to watch you can put in the programme you taped last night while you were out. You can replace the hated with the loved. There's no longer any need to give the unknown a try, until you happen to catch an episode, or see the repeats next summer.

All of which means that it takes longer for a series to build a following. Series still become hits because of word of mouth, because people talk about them in the office, but whereas ten years ago there'd be a group of fans spreading the word halfway through the first run, a series is now unlikely to build any real following until the second season. By then, the foundations are laid for it to take off in the third year. But by then it's already been cancelled ...

This may seem like conjecture. But Casualty did take off in its third year, the one it almost failed to reach. And people were beginning to talk about Campion by the end of the (inferior) second season, and had finally got to know the large cast of Rockcliffe's Babies (whose first season was sabotaged by the same strike that hit Star Cops). The series which replaced them had to contend with more firmly established rivals over on ITV, like Boon, which destroyed The Paradise Club. By ITV's standards, Boon's never been a hit, barely making the top thirty, but it has built up a solid audience which would put it in the BBC's top ten and who won't defect to the BBC's new offering.

I'm not trying to say that any series will become a hit if you let it run for three years. Some, such as Waterfront Beat (just cancelled -- after two seasons, oddly enough) just don't have what it takes. But to expect a hit any earlier is unrealistic, and this slowing of audience response, combined with lengthening production schedules which mean that a series (particularly if filmed) has to be renewed before it is even first shown, place more and more responsibility on the judgement of the Controller.

Which brings us nicely to Jonathan Powell.

Now, unlike some fans (at least to judge by their letters), I do not consider Jonathan Powell to be the anti-christ. The man is a brilliant producer. His Barchester Chronicles is one of the greatest pieces of television ever made, and it's a crime that he never got to produce the later novels. His Bleak House could endear Dickens even to those for whom the death of Little Nell is the funniest passage in English literature. But that doesn't make him a good Controller -- at least, not for BBC1, in 1991.

He might have run BBC2 very well. He might have run BBC1 very well ten or twenty years ago. Huw Wheldon came from a similarly 'sheltered' background in the prestige, high culture part of the BBC and his era saw the birth of some of the most popular programmes ever made. But things have changed and BBC1 is now, effectively, a commercial channel. It became one five years ago under the control of Michael Grade and whether you like the development or not, it's happened and is unlikely to be reversed while the threat that the BBC's own charter might be revised by market-orientated conservatives remains.

It's easy to imagine the brief which Powell was given when he became controller. 'Grade's got the ratings back up [which is how his tenure is judged by the industry]. Keep them there. Show that we can give the public what they want as well as any commercial channel. Don't give them an excuse to privatise us.' But if those were his orders, he's failing miserably.

Look at the BBC1 and ITV top thirties. Both range from 19 million (Coronation Street and EastEnders) down to 7.8 million (Telly Addicts and Hale and Pace). But in between, the BBC1 figures are consistently two to three million behind those of ITV. In 16th place, Minder's 12.09 million beats the 8.95 of Two Point Four Children (whose similarity to Roseanne is so great that the BBC legal department must live in fear of the imminent writ). At 23, Boon (10.19) slaughters The House of Eliott (8.49); in fact, as the charts below show, ITV's peaktime weekday schedules drop below 8 million only where they have given up, scheduling documentaries, regional opt-outs or American imports (which have long since ceased to be an easy route to ratings success). In contrast, BBC1 rises above nine million for only five programmes! In one recent week, the two channels had respective audience shares of 32% and 45%, an astonishing drop even on the disappointing 38% share BBC1 was getting a year ago. That's as embarrassing as Wales' defeat at the hands of Western Samoa!

The single bright spot in the BBC's performance came on Saturday, where they got solidly good figures against ITV's big Saturday night films, such as the twentieth screening of Dr No. The real biggie that night, the premiere of Buster, wasn't on until 9.30, at which point the BBC's audience dropped to seven million. Nevertheless, Saturday night remained successful throughout the season, in direct contrast to Sunday's programmes, which were badly hit by the return of Inspector Wexford and London's Burning (which rapidly overtook Casualty in the ratings), and was the only part of BBC1's schedule to benefit 'wholesale' from the traditional ratings increase after the clocks were put back. Otherwise BBC1's ratings remained largely unchanged, with the top thirty continuing to cover the range from 20 to 8 million, whereas ITV's top thirty put on a couple of million across the board. All in all, BBC1's performance this autumn has been perhaps its worst on record.

In view of this, it's worth remembering that when Powell was appointed, the BBC's board expected him to be working under Michael Grade, who was going to become the Managing Director, Television, with a widened brief giving him effective control over both channels. Now, you can say what you like about Grade, but he's good at what he does, and what he does is *competetive scheduling*. Whether that's a talent which makes him an appropriate choice to succeed Jeremy Isaacs at Channel Four is debatable, but the Channel Four trustees evidently thought so because they offered him the job (Isaacs is reputed to have cried at the news), and he defected a few months before he was due to take up his new post, leaving the heir apparent to step into his shoes.

One has to ask whether Powell would have become Controller had the board known what would happen. It seems far more likely that they would have imported a competetive scheduler from ITV, leaving Powell to wait until his predecessor as Head of Drama, Graeme McDonald, vacated the top job at BBC2. Given his background, that would certainly have suited him better than becoming Controller of BBC1 without the backing of the master scheduler, Grade. He seems to have realised that himself, because he's not tried to run the channel in the style one might have expected. Instead, he's tried to imitate Michael Grade.

And this is the root of the problem. He is not Michael Grade. He does not have Grade's populist touch. What he does seem to have, aside from the not uncommon blind spot of being unable to take science fiction seriously (though one report suggest that he is a fan of literary science-fiction, disliking media SF, sci-fi as it is disparagingly known), is the BBC's vaguely elitist belief that the public can't appreciate quality when they see it. So when a series he likes, which he's renewed for a second run, doesn't take off, he assumes it's because the public have no taste and orders more Neighbours.

Well, quality does get ratings. Casualty shows that. But you have to give people time to recognise it. That's a lesson, oddly enough, which the Americans have finally learnt from the phenomenal success of Cheers and its fellows. Cheers was watched by two men and a dog during its first season, and by every standard of the time should have been cancelled. But NBC's boss refused to kill it, partly because he had nothing better with which to replace it, but mostly because he liked it so much he couldn't believe it wouldn't catch on. It's now been in the top five for almost eight years ...

He had faith in his own judgement. The result is that America has rarely produced as many quality shows as it has recently (though stupidities do still occur), while the BBC has entered a slow decline.

The original version of this article, commissioned and written three months ago, ended by expressing the hope that Powell might respond to this autumn's disaster by beginning to trust his instincts (perhaps even commissioning some hardcore SF if the report of his liking for the literary variety was accurate). But his response is now all too clear, and has dispelled any hopes I might have retained.

'I believe that BBC drama has a different job [than just winning ratings] ... The BBC should be about ideals. If BBC1 drops its commitment to [provide a diverse range of programming] there is nowhere else in mainstream television it will be found. Our proper [audience] share will be defined when we've defined what are the proper programmes.'

That might appear to be just what I'd hoped to hear. But Powell's actions make it clear that he intends to continue imitating Grade, and that the final comment (which could be accurately translated as 'I'll decide if something's a success, thank you very much') is sincere. To hear the man who axed Campion, who banned science-fiction on the grounds that 'it isn't popular', paying lip service to 'public service' and 'diversity of programming' in order to defend Trainer is frankly nauseating, particularly if you believe in the ideals of the BBC and feel (in the words of Patricia Hodgson, the head of the BBC's planning and policy unit) that it should be defending itself by 'making more of its mission'.

Powell's response has been to axe Wogan (a long overdue decision), and replace it with a soap opera called Little England, about British expatriates living in Spain, which is to be made by Cinema Verity and is devised by Julia Smith and Tony Holland.

A soap opera, from the team which created EastEnders, run several times a week, at 7pm. That really adds to the diversity of BBC1's schedules. It's just the sort of brilliant scheduling gambit Michael Grade would have come up with. It's just the sort of brilliant scheduling gambit he *did* come up with, seven years ago. But Powell's final strategy, with which he hopes to avoid the sack (sorry, failure to renew contract) which surely awaits him if BBC1's performance doesn't recover in '92, is not only unoriginal, it is also fundamentally flawed.

Oh, I'm sure that, with Julia Smith and Verity Lambert at the helm, Little England will be a well made and (once it's settled in) successful series, pulling an audience of around ten million (double that of Wogan), though it won't do as well as it could, because the 7pm slot isn't that promising for a soap (as Michael Grade recognised when he moved EastEnders forward half an hour just before it took off -- expect a similar move for Little England, to 8pm, as Powell gets desperate). But it won't do what Powell hopes and hold that audience for the rest of the evening because *it's a soap*. The soap hating audience won't watch it (personally, the one thing guaranteed not to lure me from the one serial I do follow, The Archers, is another soap!), while most of those who do will be soap fans who'll defect en masse to Coronation Street at 7.30. (In fact, with Little England in place, soap fans will be able to lather themselves solidly from 7pm till 8.30pm each week-night at the touch of a remote!)

All this means is that, just as now, the ratings battle will hinge on the comedies Powell plans to deploy at 8pm. The current weakness of BBC1 comedy was described in an earlier article (*No Laughing Matter*, DWB 93), and while there has been some improvement (Waiting for God certainly hit critical mass last season), much of BBC1's comedy output is as weak as Michael Aitkins' other series, Roy's Raiders. Jonathan Powell, however, seems blind to this, preferring to quote statistics which prove he has doubled the output of the BBC's comedy department. That's pointless if it just spreads the talent more thinly, reducing the overall quality. A handful of successes are useless if most of the 180 hours a year produced is dull, especially as decent BBC2 comedies (Harry Enfield, KYTV ...) no longer seem to get BBC1 repeats.

Little England will have the same effect on BBC drama. BBC1's recovery depends on the production of strong drama for the late evening. But if the BBC's making 130 hours of soap a year, it's using a lot of talent that other drama needs -- people like Verity Lambert, Michael Ferguson and Gerard Glaister (to name only producers), who ten years ago were making Minder, Airline and Secret Army. Powell himself has acknowledged the BBC's need for stronger drama (particularly detective shows), but without these people and others like them they're unlikely to get made well. In the sixties, serials such as Compact and The Newcomers were regarded almost as 'training grounds'. Now they're made by the most experienced and talented people in the business, and the rest of popular drama is suffering as a result.

The BBC, as Patricia Hodgson says, needs to set itself new targets. It should be aiming to provide a wide range of moderately popular programmes, instead of destroying itself in pursuit of hits. And if Powell genuinely means what he's said, then there's one decision he can take which would offer swift results. He himself has complained that the deaths of Dynasty and Dallas, which pulled a respectable but unexceptional eight million on average, have left him 'looking at hours of unfilled drama'. He could (and we'll agree to ignore the fact that Dynasty ended thirty months ago, while he himself moved Dallas out of primetime) replace them with two other American dramas which would almost certainly match those ratings (they are, after all, getting five million on BBC2) and which would definitely add to the diversity of BBC1's programming. They're called Star Trek: The Next Generation and Quantum Leap.

But I'm forgetting. They're science fiction, and science-fiction isn't popular. Which makes you wonder where Powell's priorities *really* lie ...

ANTHONY BROWN

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
7.00	Wogan	11.76		10,67	Wogan	10.73		9.26	Wogan	10.60
8.00		18.26	18.00			18.40	19.08			19.26
	7.82	12.99		12.52	9.60	Film	8.57	12.10		10.81
	8.10		8.95	9.59	9.60		10.13		8.56	10.81
9.00	News	Film	8.18	10.19	8.07		News	12.09	8.75	
10.00			8.69	10.19	8.83			12.09	13.65	
10.30		News	8.69	8.18	8.83	News		8.58	13.65	News

Saturday		Sunday	
8.58			
9.71	12.22		
9.71	12.22		
9.87	12.87	9.22	9.02
	12.87		12.69
10.97	12.87		12.69
8.46	12.87	9.46	13.60
8.46		8.01	13.60
	13.71	8.01	
	13.71		7.82

BBC1 & ITV Top Thirties (Peak Time, W/E 29th September)
(BBC on Left, ITV on Right. If Blank, ratings less than 7.8 million)

JOHN GIACOBBI ON *SAVING 'WHO*

Tim Burchill talks to JOHN GIACOBBI, chairman of the Doctor Who Action Committee which is campaigning for the return of the series, to find out the aims of the committee, and how they intend to achieve them.

TIM BURCHILL : You're widely known now in Doctor Who circles as one of a group of people who are taking the BBC to court over the non-production of Doctor Who. When did your interest in Doctor Who first come about?

JOHN GIACOBBI : I'm of the generation that was brought up with Doctor Who. It was one of the first sci-fi series to capture the imagination, and certainly the only prominent British one. I've always had a personal interest in Doctor Who, and then through our entertainment industry connections we were asked to become involved in the Save the Doctor campaign, which we very gladly did.

So what did you like best about Doctor Who?

The quality and intrigue of the plots and stories. This is part of the current campaign, that the quality in latter years did decline, through no fault of the concept of Doctor Who itself but mainly through the fault of the BBC's lack of funding and general waning enthusiasm for the programme.

If you go back to the early 80s, and certainly through the 1970s, there was more of an interest from the BBC in Doctor Who. Why do you think that subsequently the BBC took less and less of an interest in the series?

To be perfectly frank, I haven't got the faintest idea. Apart from the obvious suggestion that some of the personnel inside the BBC -- and without wishing to be defammatory of any particular person -- have some sort of vendetta, because when you look at the facts, this is a programme that has been around for a quarter of a century, is eternally popular, and is proven to be very profitable, one cannot understand why they won't bring it back. In fact this forms the very crux of the whole legal argument that we're going to mount against the BBC.

When was the Doctor Who Action Committee first formed?

The current Doctor Who Action Committee is two or three months old, and the campaign isn't officially launched yet. That said, there have been articles in various newspapers in England, and in overseas newspapers as far afield as Australia. We have conducted interviews with Radio New Zealand live on the air, also with RTE in Ireland. The campaign proper will be launched on a programme known as Biteback, which is an independent production, commissioned by the BBC as a consumer programme whereby BBC viewers and licence payers can air their grievances against the BBC but the independent producers have been given complete production and editorial control, so hopefully the BBBC won't interfere in any way with the editorial bias of the programme. In the week after the programme, because the programme is broadcast on a Sunday, we shall issue proceedings on the BBC and have a press conference to launch the campaign officially.

What precisely are your reasons for forming the committee and pressing your case for the BBC to bring Doctor Who back?

There are legal reasons, which I'll come onto, but the main reason is one that is shared in common by myself and all the committee members and by hundreds of thousands, if not millions of viewers and fans, that this is a programme that we all love and that it's quality programming, and it ought to be brought back.

Going on to legal reasons, there are two main strands of the legal argument. The first one is that we shall endeavour to assert that the BBC is in the unique position vis-à-vis its viewers in that the viewers, ie. the licence fee payers, compulsarily fund the BBC as opposed to ITV or any other satellite company, it's a direct relationship. Since we want to establish a direct relationship, ie. a trust, and this trust obviously isn't in writing between the BBC and licence fee payers necessarily, what is known as a constructive trust can be applied, so once we have proved that there is a duty that exists between the BBC and the licence fee payers, then one can go on to define what the parameters of that duty are and what the terms of the trust are. What we say is that the BBC is under a duty to the fee payers to produce programming that passes the quality threshold, that passes the popularity threshold, and to a certain extent is profitable in nature. Doctor Who satisfies all these criteria, but they are refusing to reinstate it, so as far as we're concerned there's a trust there of which they're in breach.

There also a second strand, and a very important one as well, to the legal one, and it's very similar. The BBC is a public body, and the officers of public bodies, be it BR or the BBC, are obliged to exercise due diligence when they make their decisions. Again we look at the backdrop of the decision making process at the BBC. Here is a programme that's been around for 25 years, that is extremely popular to this day, and even more importantly, makes a profit. BBC Enterprises have made enormous amounts of money off video sales which continue to top the video charts, Doctor Who books, Doctor Who records ... it's an extremely profitable venture, so when you look at the background and you see that the BBC have decided to can the series, one has to bring their judgment seriously into question. As the BBC is a public body this can actually be done by means of what is known as 'judicial review', whereby you ask the courts to review whether the BBC have exercised due discretion and diligence in arriving at this ludicrous conclusion that they don't want to bring Doctor Who back.

Both arguments actually fall quite neatly under the Citizens' Charter banner, which is something that John Major is looking to assert at the moment, the right of the consumer vis à vis British Gas, British Rail, British Broadcasting. Whilst the Citizens' Charter as yet has no kind of legal status, our legal arguments very much fit into that mould. In tandem with the law case when we issue proceedings, there shall be a substantive publicity campaign mounted against the BBC to highlight all these various issues, in order to transcend the Doctor Who 'barrier' as it were, so it's not something unique to Doctor Who fans -- it's a Citizens' Charter issue. Are these bodies going to be properly accountable to the public, to their users, in this case television viewers?

> ***"The legal case is just one element of a multi-pronged attack"***

So at the end of the day, what do you hope to achieve? Do you think the BBC will actually take you seriously?

The BBC, for reasons best known to themselves, are smugly, and ignorantly in my view, trying to ignore this huge groundswell of support for Doctor Who, but like it or not, when proceedings are issued on the BBC they'll have no alternative other than to take it seriously, because once a writ has been issued you have to answer it. We shall put in our statement of claim thereafter and they'll have to file a defence and then the thing will have a life of its own. So at that stage they won't be able to sit in their ivory towers and smirk any longer.

Let's now go through the Action Committee agenda in some detail. Where do you go from here?

There are various objectives to achieve. The legal case is just one element of a multi-pronged attack on the BBC. We will be issuing proceedings and pressing home the legal argument. We're also going to be mounting a multi-media campaign through television, daily press and perhaps demonstrations and things of that nature, to highlight the plight of the Doctor. In addition, we are currently making an approach to one of the new ITV franchise holders. At the end of the day we are 100% confident that Doctor Who will come back. Now we're not saying that it will necessarily come back through the BBC, although that really ought to be its rightful place, but if they continue to ignore it there are other companies who would be more than happy to take on the Doctor Who series, ie. to license it off the BBC. If you look at the criteria that the new franchise holders are faced with, they want quality programming that's going to pass that threshold, and they want programming that's going to be popular, and in our view Doctor Who satisfies both those criteria very easily. We're in the process of talking to one of the prominent new franchise holders, and depending on the outcome of those discussions we will then launch a bid to take the series off the BBC, either with that franchise holder or, if they decided not to pursue it, we shall speak to the others with a view to arranging the same thing, ie. go to the BBC and say 'look, if you're not going to do it, fine -- it's a profit-making venture, we'll buy it off you through a franchise holder and then they'll put it out, because the demand is there and it ought to be satsified.'

Can they refuse to sell it to you?

Yes they can, but that brings in another legal argument which is one whereby one has a valuable copyright and does not exploit it. There are various legal remedies whereby you can acquire those copyrights for good value in order that they may be exploited. However, at this early stage, whilst we have fairly firm views on the legal attacks, we shall be going to see a barrister in chambers who specialises in trust and judicial review litigation, and once we've done that we'll be able to give you a far more detailed legal analysis. If the BBC say no, we're not going to sell it to another franchise holder under any circumstances, they can offer us a hundred million, then we would go to court and question that process.

Have you actually approached the hierarchy of the BBC? People like Peter Cregeen, Jonathan Powell, Alan Ayres?

I personally haven't approached them in this campaign. However, over the course of the past year and a half they have been approached on numerous occasions with complaints as to why aren't they bringing it back, also with offers from independent production companies as opposed to franchise holders who would be interested to acquire it, and in most cases these approaches have been met with a stony silence, they haven't even been given the courtesy of a reply. Unfortunately there does appear to be an unfathomable degree of intransigence in the BBC that we're going to have to tackle head on.

How many different events are you planning within the Action Committee to press home your point that Doctor Who must come back, if not with them then with somebody else? How far in the future have you planned?

We've planned through Biteback, the press conference, the issue of proceedings, and then there will be various stages along the way in the legal procedure and we can highlight those when the time comes. When the BBC file their defence we can take issue on that, and when we have to go to court we can again highlight that. Also the Action Committee has planned a raffle whereby various rare items such as original Cybermen heads -- we're also looking to have a Dalek, either an original or a full-size reproduction -- as the prizes in a competition. The draw for that will be around Easter.

I assume the prizes will not be donated by the BBC!

Unfortunately not, although if they read this article, they're most welcome to donate artefacts to the cause.

So how far in advance have you planned events?

We have a skeletal structure between now and next Easter. Within that structure there is a degree of flexibility to be able to put other events in at short notice. We're going to be able to spring things on them by surprise.

How many people actually constitute the Action Committee?

There are about sixteen people on the committee. I chair the committee and the official committee spokesman is Jeremy Bentham, although I'm the co-spokesman. There are various other members of the committee. Unfortunately because a lot of them are in the tv/film entertainment business and want to remain anonymous, they fear that their careers might be in jeopardy because they have dealings with the BBC and don't want to be put on any BBC blacklist.

I won't ask for any names, but any actors involved in the Action Committee?

There are no actors on the day-to-day committee, although actors who, for want of a better expression, are 'friends of the committee'. The committee is the core structure of people who have been allocated various tasks to perform, such as the collection of information for the trial, or promotion and press, or the legal aspects, but there are in addition friends of the Doctor who are too numerous to contemplate naming but they encompass actors, although again, at this stage we are in no position to name anybody.

What do you say to the BBC's many announcements that Doctor Who is not being cancelled, it's merely being given a rest until they can find the correct format to bring the programme back through the 1990s? Is it really necessary, in the light of what they're saying, to mount this campaign?

Unfortunately we take a rather sceptical view of what the BBC has told us to date, because previously the last time the series was cancelled and eventually reinstated it was only reinstated because of the vast pressure brought to bear on the BBC. Once again they've cancelled the series and said it'll be back at some point in the future. They continue to avoid telling us when exactly it will be back, so we take the rather sceptical view that this may well be a rouse to defuse the situation and take the wind out of our sails. Even if they do plan to bring it back they can't tell us when. If it's going to be 2010 then it's not going to make us very happy.

Even though they've said they're going to be bringing Doctor Who back as "a vibrant addition to the programme through the 1990s"?

It's 1992 and there's no sign of any forward planning on the BBC's behalf. One has to look at these announcements against the background of almost outright hostility that there's been towards the Doctor within the BBC, which is something that we've found very hard to fathom. It's with great reluctance that we've had to embark on this course, but we see it as the best course of action to secure a future for the Doctor.

How much will the legal action cost if you lose?

Obviously we're going to try to keep costs down to a minimum. First of all it's campaign money being raised by fans of the Doctor, and secondly any proceeds left over are going to go to the National Film Institute, so we're not looking to make a loss, we're looking to make a profit at the end of the day. One has to budget anywhere from £2,000 on to £10,000, primarily to fund a barrister in court. Were one to lose the question of costs is raised, ie. we might be faced with the BBC's costs as well as our own costs, but we're very confident that there will be a satisfactory resolution of this matter. We don't actually see a famous legal victory, or defeat for that matter, in two years time. We see the campaign as a whole bringing sufficient pressure to bear so that we'll be in a position to reach settlement with the BBC prior to a distant courtroom date. However, if they're not willing to settle then there is sufficient support and there will be sufficient funds to take the thing to the bitter end. But we hope that the BBC won't be that foolish in wasting licence payers' money.

So it's vastly exaggerated in the press, £30,000 is not the figure that you'll be spending?

Well, it's certainly not a figure that we hope to be spending, again because we see that all the money raised is money better spent donated to a good cause such as the National Film Institute for the preservation of rare footage and things of that nature. How much money is spent is largely down to the BBC. If they want to be ignorant about it and pig-headed then unfortunately it's going to cost both Doctor Who fans and licence payers money. If they decide to be sensible about it then there'll be a happy solution for everyone, there'll be less costs spent all round, the programme will be back which will make people happy, and the BBC will receive money, either through having it on the air or having it licensed through a third party.

If, at the end of the day, you're no further forward than when you started and you fail in the litigation, will you mount another attempt?

Well to be quite frank, at this stage we don't want to countenance defeat, we're all extremely positive. The committee embraces people from all walks of life, from the entertainment sector, the legal sector, the media sector, and we're a very strong-willed group of people and we're not intending in any way to fail. So as far as we're concerned, the Doctor will be back. We can't promise exactly when, or on what channel, but at some stage in the not-too-distant future we will secure a future for the Doctor.

Do you think that there is a vendetta against the programme? That the BBC put the programme on against Coronation Street to deliberately get low viewing figures to justify taking it off?

I don't know the people involved, so I certainly can't put myself in their minds to reason their decisions. All I can say is that we're mystified as to why they've treated the programme the way they have.

Would you like Doctor Who to continue forever? One day, realistically, it must end, so why not now?

The programme is still enormously popular today, and as far as I'm concerned the Doctor ought to go on, if not ad infinitum, until such time as people don't want to watch it. And right now there are four million-plus who want to watch it.

Do you think Doctor Who has moved away from being a mass audience programme to being a more specialist programme, where only the fans and a certain generation are watching?

No, I don't actually. When it comes to video sales then obviously you're in a slightly more specialised market where you have people who only want to see Patrick Troughton videos, or others who want Pertwee videos, but I disagree. There's a whole new generation of potential Doctor Who fans who are missing out on Doctor Who. I strongly feel that when it comes back, apart from our generation there'll be a whole new generation of fans and hopefully in time our children will become Doctor Who fans.

A lot has been said over the years about how much Doctor Who costs to make and how much it makes in profits. Do you know exactly how much that is?

We have substantial information already as to the profitability of Doctor Who -- the various figures for videos, books, overseas tv sales, that sort of thing -- so we have fairly good information about that. It makes a huge profit. There was a sale not long ago of old costumes and things [Bonhams], and the money raised from that sale was sufficient to pay a whole season's worth of costumes.

Where do you get this information from?

> ***"for the Doctor to have a long future there has to be change"***

A lot of sources outside the BBC, but we also happen to have in our possession an affidavit which was sworn by the BBC some time back when they were actually suing a third party who was cashing in on Doctor Who. They went on official court record as saying how valuable it was, and what a great thing it was, and all the money it made, and fortunately we've managed to obtain a copy of this affidavit and the boot is now firmly on the other foot because they're all of a sudden saying 'no, we can't bring it back, no one wants it, it's not popular any more', so I think they've shot themselves in the foot to a large extent and we'll be bringing that to the public's attention in due course.

Some people have said that if you force the BBC to either sell the programme or bring it back they'll say "OK, we'll bring it back but we'll really *muck it up this time".*

For them to do that, quite apart from the fact that it's totally unprofessional and negligent, that people in the BBC could have such a conspiracy at that stage would certainly fall foul of the law because the BBC have a charter and their job is to make quality programming and to make it popular -- not to make a programme and deliberately set to hijack it. That would be an insane course of action, and if anyone dreamed of doing it the consequences for them would be severe.

Haven't they done that already?

I'm sure that the people who have been responsible for the last few series of Doctor Who thought in their own minds that they were doing the right thing, but from the objective point of view we would beg to differ with them.

Are you looking back at the series through rose-coloured spectacles? Is it just that you don't like change?

Not at all, we're all for change. For the Doctor to have a long future there has to be change -- there comes a point where you have to go on to a new Doctor, a new actor -- but it's a question of the quality of production, the seriousness of the scripts, and also the choice of the actor to play the Doctor.

You mentioned quality. Can you define what 'quality' means within Doctor Who? Do you mean as in the 1970s, the 'classic' Pertwee and Baker years?

One has to move on, you can't necessarily measure quality against a yardstick of the 60s or 70s. In terms of script, yes, but things do move on. You can't put things side by side and say this was better than that, because they were made twenty years apart. The quality that I would say was important was the actual script-writing. The storylines have got weaker and there's been a tendency in later years to make a bit of a joke out of the Doctor and have all this comedy elements which weren't previously part of the Doctor.

There certainly were in Patrick Troughton and Tom Baker's time.

Yes, but in later years they've introduced guest celebrities in cameo roles that basically haven't fitted in and it's tended to make a bit of a mockery of it. There was a comedy element in Troughton, but it was more sophisticated than the kind of slapstick that has tended to predominate in recent years.

Do you think you'll look back in five or ten years time at this litigation and, if Doctor Who's still running, think "what was all the fuss about?"

If I look back on this in five or ten years and the programme's back then I'll be very happy. The people on the committee are unfortunately forced into the position of being sceptical of the BBC's plans, so if it takes a carrot and a stick to bring it back then we're all for doing it, because we want to ensure a secure future for the Doctor we'd rather not leave in the hands of the BBC, who in our view have neglected something that's part of our television heritage.

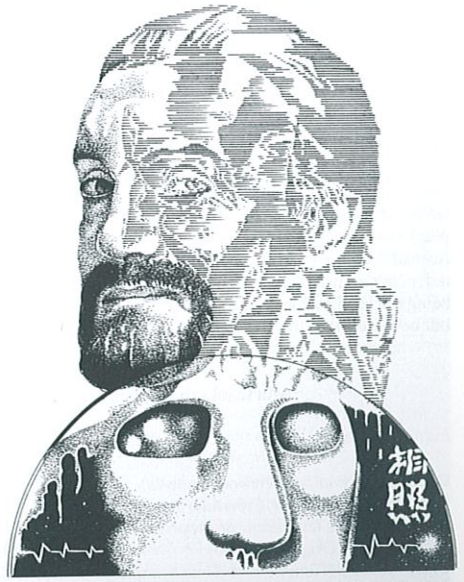
John Giacobbi, thank you very much, and we wish you all success with the campaign.

Thank you.

THE DEATH OF YESTERDAY

(FINAL PART)

SEASON 23



The '85 cancellation meant that a large number of scripts were abandoned. Graham Williams' *Nightmare Fair*, Philip Martin's *Mission to Magnus* and Wally K Daly's *The Ultimate Evil* are all familiar thanks to Target's missing episodes series, and as such will not be described >

here. Other stories considered for inclusion in the original season twenty-three included Christopher H Bidmead's *In the Hollows of Time* (aka *Penecasta*?), commissioned in November '84, Peter Grimwade's *League of the Tancreds* (August '84), Ian Marter's *Strange Encounter* (aka *Volovox*), which is reputed to have concerned hospital overcrowding, and an outline from Chris Boucher.

Also in circulation around this time was Johnny Byrne's *The Guardians of Prophecy* (sometimes referred to as *The Place of Serenity*). A 'sequel' to *The Keeper of Traken*, this was set on another planet in the Benign Union of Traken, and explained the origins of both the Melkur and the Source. *The Guardians of Prophecy* was written in July '83, soon after the recording of *Warriors of the Deep*, which led directly to another abandoned serial. *Doctor Who and the Macromen*, also known as *The Macros*, was written by Ingrid Pitt and her husband Tony Rudlin after her appearance in the above serial, and was based around the second world war Philadelphia Project, which attempted to make a battleship radar invisible and, according to this story, attracted the attention of microscopic aliens. (The project also inspired the American film The Philadelphia Experiment.) Unfortunately, only the first episode of this story had been written before the cancellation broke, though Ingrid Pitt had, until then, been sufficiently confident of its use to include it in her resume.

Almost immediately after the cancellation, Pip and Jane Baker were commissioned to write a four-part (25 minutes per episode) story called *Gallifray* (sic). Robert Holmes, on the other hand, had been commissioned to write *Yellow Fever* two weeks earlier. This was probably the Autons/Singapore story often described as *Evil of the Autons*, for which Holmes completed an outline but no scripts. He was then asked to write *Wasteland* in October '85, by which point the structure of the season had been determined, with the plan then being that the Valeyard should present three sections of evidence to the court -- past, present and future, in the tradition of A Christmas Carol. *Wasteland* is listed as written off by the BBC, but nonetheless was probably an early version of *The Mysterious Planet*. This was then followed by *Time Incorporated*, commissioned in February '86, three months before Holmes' death. This was presumably Holmes' version of the final two episodes of *Trial of a Time Lord*, later completed by Eric Saward, which would have left both the Valeyard and the Doctor trapped in the collapsing Matrix at the season's end, leaving open the possibility of recasting the Doctor.

Holmes' conclusion was itself a replacement for Christopher H Bidmead's ominously titled *The Last Adventure*, which had been commissioned some months earlier, and whose remaining episodes were replaced by *Terror of the Vervoids*. That after almost eighteen months if planning, and the commissioning of a good dozen scripts, season twenty-three was eventually completed by the only authors capable of writing a script within the deadline cannot have given the BBC much confidence in the series' production team.

Since Andrew Cartmel's arrival the number of unused scripts decreased, with leftovers generally being used in the following season (though authors have frequently had to submit several ideas before receiving a commission). Hence it seems likely that *Alixion*, by Robin Mukherjee (who followed Cartmel to Casualty last year) would have formed part of season twenty-seven. Instead, whether Doctor Who ends or moves to independent production, *Alixion* has the distinction of being the last in a long line of Doctor Who scripts bought, but never used, by the BBC.

ANTHONY BROWN
with thanks to Stephen James Walker

Further reading :

DWB 50 (*Operation Werewolf* synopsis)
DWB 97 (*Return of the Cybermen* synopsis)
DWM 170 (*The Guardians of Prophecy* synopsis)
The Frame 9 (Origins of Who)
The Frame 12 (*Gamble with Time* synopsis)
The Frame Douglas Camfield Tribute (Foreign Legion)
In-Vision 2 (original *Ark in Space*)
Proteus 3 (*The Macros* synopsis)
Purple Haze 1 (*Sealed Orders*)
Time Screen 5 (*The Big Store* and *Zeta Plus One*)

2003: A SPACE IDIOCY

A review of the 'Doct or Who Motion Picture' previewed last issue

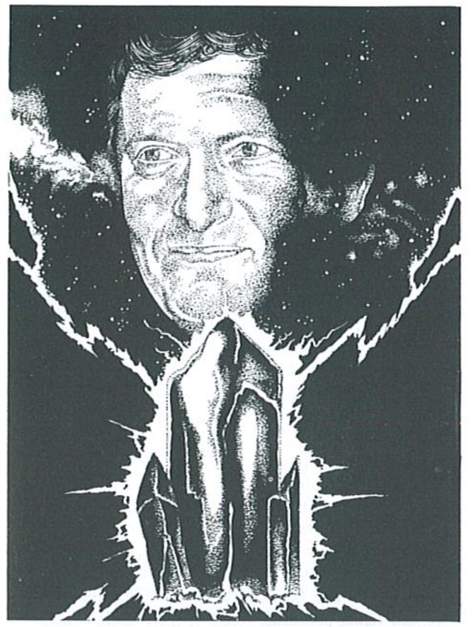
IT'S AN exciting time to be a Doctor Who fan. The latest series of New Adventures is the best since Paul Cornell quit as editor, while the BBC's new Director General, Verity Lambert, has promised to award the contract for production of Season 27 before the end of the year. But best of all is the news that, after fifteen years of preproduction, *Doctor Who : The Movie* is scheduled for release on the series' fortieth anniversary this November. Along with some of the most prominent names in fandom, I was privileged to be invited to a special preview of the film as shooting concluded last month.

As promised, the film is an all-action adventure in the tradition of that timeless classic Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, spanning both space and time. Indeed, the sequence on the planet Kernos could almost have been lifted from that movie. The film also has many similarities to the Bond canon, in particular the murderous Neglos, a villain in the mould of the indestructable Jaws. In fact, some fans felt that the film had been influenced rather too greatly by Bond. To present the eternally independent Doctor as a willing agent of the Time Lords is one thing, but to imply (as the reference to the Doctor carrying out sentence of death on Varnax does) that he's been given a Licence to Kill ...

Mention of Varnax brings us to the villains of the piece, and a nastier trio you couldn't imagine. Though it isn't explained why a group of Time Lords should need the aid of the fusion crystals to regenerate, that the Doctor was responsible for their plight gives an extra edge to the film, making it easy to understand Varnax's hatred for the Doctor. In fact, Varnax's first encounter with the Doctor would perhaps have made an even more interesting film. Perhaps it could be related in a prequel?

Turning to the casting, it's unfortunate that the continual delays forced Arnold Schwarzenegger to abandon the part of Gonjii, for which he was so eminently suited, while it must have been galling for Caroline Munro that after such a long association with the project her role is neither Cora, the Doctor's companion, nor Zilla, his long lost love, but instead the aged matriarch Mother Cajage. As for the Doctor, it's good to be able to report that, after so many names have been mentioned in connection with the part, the eventual choice proved to be a stroke of pure genius. The film's portrayal is pleasantly reminiscent of Colin Baker's increasingly popular incarnation, and will, I'm sure, be well received. The Doctor's tendency to make silly quips (such as *'Pop goes the Weazll'*) after fights brings to mind the acid bath battle in *Vengeance on Varos*, while his sexually charged conversation with Zilla is remarkably similar to the one he shared with the late Kate O'Mara's character in *The Mark of the Rani*. Having said that, though, certain scenes would probably have worked better had some of the earlier suggestions for the role been chosen instead -- the Doctor's impersonation of a prostitute in the opening sequence would have been more convincing if a shorter actor, such as Dudley Moore, had taken the part. Still, it could have been worse -- just imagine John Cleese playing the scene as a Python pepperpot woman!

The references to prostitution in this and other places are among a number of adult touches (a technician is seen reading 'Male Impotence' at one point) which distinguish the film from the tv series. But Tim Munro, the DWAS co-ordinator, did point out that these subjects are not touched on in any depth, making their inclusion, in his opinion, a rather childish and immature attempt to convince the adolescent audience that this is an 'adult' film. Older readers will recall the controversy which greeted *Genesys*, the first of the New Adventures (isn't it about time that Virgin dropped that subtitle?) on its publication, and the film seems set to rekindle the same debate.



One element of the film which is very faithful to the tv series is the character of Cora. Following long-established Who tradition, she lets loose frequent screams and stands on the sidelines of fights, in a way which I found a refreshing change from the liberated and self-sufficient women of Blake's Second Seven and Star Trek : The Latest Generation.

The fight scenes, equally, are marvellous. As endless streams of Neglos's Warriors fall to Gonjii and Shane's attacks, one is irresistably reminded of those wonderful old Rambo films the BBC runs during the school holidays, in which the communist soldiers never shoot straight and the heroes never run out of ammunition. Of course, the more 'intellectually demanding' critics may *claim* to find these continual battles rather tedious, but the film's producers are confident that their audience will find themselves awaiting each fresh encounter between Gonjii and Neglos with bated breath, cheering the combatants on. Some fans, however, had more specific concerns about these scenes, objecting to the Doctor's use of a gun (and to his general lack of compassion for his enemies). As they pointed out, the film does seem rather confused as to whether the Warriors are machines or mechanically augmented people, and in the script they are both 'destroyed' and 'killed'. Indeed, they are occasionally 'wasted', and Peter Darvill-Evans, who warned against the use of this term in his original outline for the Timewyrm novels, would not be pleased.

The script is peppered with American expressions such as 'wasted', while the portrayal of the police as either cheery Bobbies (in 1932) or Cops (in the present day) is very Hollywood. In addition, one of the Doctor's companions is an American student back-packing around Europe, and the TARDIS's landing on Columbus's vessel is clearly intended to appeal to the American market. Thankfully the Doctor himself remains resolutely English, even if, with the introduction of the Time Battalion, the Time Lords have developed a Reagan-like desire to act as the policemen of the universe.

Generally, reaction to the preview -- which consisted of rough cuts of most of the film -- was guardedly positive. However, this approval was not universal, and for the sake of balance I must report the comments of one particularly vociferous critic. He described the film as 'an inept combination of Indiana Jones, *The Ultimate Adventure* and a story from a late seventies Doctor Who annual', and claimed that while the film contained 'all the cliched trappings of Doctor Who (cyborg villains, all-powerful crystals scattered throughout time ...)', it lacked any of the series' unique spirit. Acknowledging that Johnny Byrne made valiant efforts to inject the style of the series into some scenes, he laid the responsibility for his misgivings squarely at the feet of producers Peter Litten and George Dugdale, who wrote the original story. Indeed, he went so far as to question whether they'd ever seen Doctor Who.

It is in fact believed that the series' last producer, John Nathan-Turner, sent them copies of Season 24 soon after its transmission all those years ago, and some elements of the film certainly seem to have been influenced by these serials. Varnax's ultimate goal will be familiar to anyone who's seen *Time and the Rani*, while the script's approach to scientific accuracy is in the Pip and Jane Baker tradition. As someone at the preview pointed out, if nuclear material is weapons grade, it certainly isn't waste!

All in all, I feel sure that fandom will agree that the long wait for this film has been worthwhile. The film's content hasn't quite been finalised yet (for instance, it's still hoped that a scene can be added explaining the odd disappearance of Gonjii's pet, Pog) and, of course, the censors could still insist on changes. It can only be hoped that no objections are made to the shots of Gonjii firing his daggers into Neglos's face, which some at the preview feared might lead to the film being awarded a certificate which would exclude much of its target audience (as was the case with Gremlins). If this were to happen, the film might have to be recalled so that these sequences could be reshot, and its release would be delayed yet again ...

JULIAN AMES

Iulian Ames is the editor of Powell's Revenge, winner of the DWAS Fanzine Poll 2001.

CASTROVALVA

'It's the end .. but the moment has been prepared for ...'

A QUOTE from *Logopolis* indeed, but one which illustrates the planning and forethought that went into *Castrovalva*, an often overlooked story from a season best remembered for *Earthshock*.

Davison's first serial was the culmination of the work Nathan-Turner put into Doctor Who. It was his show now -- there were no relics left over from his predecessor's tenure, so with the introduction of a new Doctor he was beginning a new era in the series' history.

For many people then, and even now, Tom Baker *was* Doctor Who. There was no one else, they grew up knowing no other actor in the role, so by establishing Peter Davison as the new Doctor, a new persona as well as a new person, *Castrovalva* had the task of exorcising the few remaining ghosts left by memories of Baker. This was not a problem -- Davison's interpretation of the Doctor came across as strikingly different from the outset: he was vulnerable, a description that could never have been applied to Tom Baker's Doctor.

The 'unstable regeneration' concept introduced us to the frailty of the fifth Doctor straightaway, but in a slightly more original way than just presenting us with this aspect of his character as a fait accompli -- the script was therefore allowed to gradually build up the new character without allowing him to dominate the script, so that in many instances viewers were left wondering whether this was the new Doctor, or just a side effect of his regeneration. The idea of instability succeeded and was the keystone of the story -- the notion of a faulty regeneration (not just a 'Doctor-wakes-up-from-coma-as-a-new-man' type situation as seen previously) has been reworked twice since and failed miserably on both occasions, mainly because neither of the scripts were critically comparable to Bidmead's.

Castrovalva was a direct follow-on from *Logopolis*, so in retrospect it is easy to think of them as one long story rather than two. Picking up at the aftermath of the epic fall from the Pharos Project telescope, the story, for those very few who don't know, follows Tegan and Nyssa's attempts to help the Doctor stabilise his regeneration. After escaping from some curious guards on Earth, and nearly being destroyed by the Master's scheme to send the TARDIS back to the creation of the universe (not the galaxy, as I believe was mentioned in the script) -- a hydrogen in-rush that would obliterate the craft -- the two companions manage to take the Doctor to Castrovalva, a place renowned for its tranquility. However, all is not what it seems, and the rest of the serial unravels the mystery of Castrovalva and establishes the whereabouts of the missing Adric -- personally I wouldn't have bothered. Of course, the new Doctor manages to escape, now fully recovered and established as the central character.

As the Doctor had to take a back seat script-wise for most of the four episodes due to his fragility, the other characters had to be brought to the fore, and so to a great extent Janet Fielding and Sarah Sutton carried the first two episodes.

In only her second story (although the fifth to be recorded) Tegan was at her best, still under the careful control of Bidmead -- brash, strong-willed and determined, she hadn't as yet fallen into the 'Angry Aussie' stereotype of later stories. Her role as 'co-ordinator' (perhaps Bidmead was a member of DWAS?) gave her a prominent part to play in juggling the problems of the Doctor's well-being with the maniacal madness of the Master and the disappearance of Adric. What do you mean, nobody missed him?

Nyssa was still her normal relatively bland self, although the large amount of dialogue allocated to her at least provided the opportunity to show the potential that could have been explored further later on in the season, but sadly wasn't.

On the whole, the weakness of the Doctor and the thankful absence of the aimless and annoying Adric allowed the companions to play a role other than 'girly window-dressing' as for once they had to fend for themselves. They didn't have the Doctor to turn to for help or to ask 'What is it?', 'Who is it?' or 'How does it work?' -- instead, in ironic role-reversal, it was he who had to turn to them for aid. The establishment of this extra independence also allowed a greater contrast to be seen between them and the repressed underlings that were the women of Castrovalva, their screen-time limited to carrying the zero cabinet or washing some laundry in the town square.

Adric was kept to a blessed minimum, although those few scenes he had a part in were the usual lack-lustre let-downs that Matthew Waterhouse became known for. These tended to involve Adric being tortured by the Master, who kept exuding strings of demonic little chuckles and exceptionally evil leers.

Unlike his other apathetic appearance in Season 19, the Master's presence seemed justified, and coupled with Bidmead's strong scripting, Fiona Cumming's tight direction and the acting ability of Anthony Ainley himself, who can deliver a damn good performance given the right dialogue, the Master was as good and as watchable as ever. Even his disguise as the Portreeve seemed plausible, unlike his pathetic Shazaam party costume from *Time Flight* or the goofy Sir Gilles ginger wig from *The King's Demons*, both aliases which were singular in the obviousness that Ainley was underneath.

Perhaps the greatest quality possessed by *Castrovalva*, however, is its dialogue. Unlike the epic sentences that can be found in later seasons' stories that make Great Expectations read like Enid Blyton, Bidmead's tend to be concise and to the point, and although he seems to have no compunction about exploring his vocabulary, words are used for purpose and drama rather than for padding and pretension.

The Castrovalvans themselves were given a certain distinctive pattern of speech that came across as being almost Shakespearian in quality, a formal and old-fashioned dialect that emphasised the differences between them and the alien interlopers to their society -- a society created in the imagination of the Master, although it does seem to be a curiously quaint and peaceful world to have sprung from his machinations. Perhaps this was the intention -- to make his involvement as unobvious as possible.

The actual Castrovalvans themselves were such strong characters that they eventually superceded the Master's influence. This is exemplified in Shardovan, the sceptical librarian, a proud and intelligent personality who made the ultimate sacrifice: his trapeze-like swing into the Master's web was accompanied by one of the best lines in episode four -- 'You made us, man of evil, but we are free.'

The melding of the excellent script with an extensive array of sets and a variety of unusually different costumes made for an impressive end product. Even the scenes inside the TARDIS in the first two episodes seemed set apart, from Davison unravelling his scarf (an ironic analogy to the turmoil in his mind caused by the trauma of regeneration) to the melted lipstick dripping down the walls of the TARDIS like blood, serving to act as a further warning of the imminent catastrophe. This was accompanied by the Cloister Bell echoing dangerously in the background, a symbolic continuation of *Logopolis*. Coupled with the reduced cast for these scenes, the tension of the situation was heightened and was highly reminiscent of *The Edge of Destruction*, mainly due to the rising feeling of claustrophobia and desperation as the TARDIS span towards a grisly fate.

The only criticisms I would level are that the serial seemed over-bright, lending the sets a false and plasticky feel (a common problem with most Davison stories), and that there was a distinct feeling at the very end of the story that a few cheap and nasty 'let's-explain-what-actually-happened' type lines were tacked on.

Nevertheless, I've always been rather fond of Bidmead's three scripts as they have qualities I value highly -- excellent dialogue, strong characters and tight scripting. All of these are exemplified in *Castrovalva*.

The very last words of the final episode sum up the story to a T -- 'absolutely splendid!' Buy it: it's worth the price and it comes in a nice BBC box.

AMANDA MURRAY

“Yabba-Dabba-*Who!*”

WELL, I must admit, when I likened Doctor Who's current fate to that of Star Trek in the seventies (see *The New Fandom*, DWB 96) I didn't expect the comparison to become so literally true! However, there it is, in the self-same issue -- a rumour that Anna Home (whom God preserve, she being the only remaining BBC Departmental Head with any artistic integrity) has approached Jonathan Powell with a view to her Children's Department reviving Doctor Who as an animated series.

This is what is termed ‘an interesting idea’. Certainly it is not without precedent for a live-action series to be cancelled but retain sufficient popularity to justify its continuation in animated form : Star Trek, The Dukes of Hazzard and (sort of) Planet of the Apes all made the transition. Nor is it the first time that the idea of an animated Who has been mooted -- the late Milton Subotsky once suggested remaking all the adventures from the start in animated form, and just last year there was a rumour that Hanna-Barbera were investigating the rights, a possibility which sent fandom into panic, conjuring up as it did visions of an Americanized Doctor travelling in a Hippy van accompanied by four teenagers and a talking dog, confronting villains who close each week's episode with the immortal declaration : *‘And I could've gotten away with it if it hadn't been for that meddling Time Lord!’*

Considered objectively, an animated Doctor Who would take the series into a medium of virtually limitless potential. Overnight its famous budgetary limitations would cease to be a problem. No longer would it be cursed by ‘cheap effects’. No longer would it look like ‘a leftover from the seventies’, to quote Michael Grade. The infamous wobbly cardboard scenery and men-in-rubber-suits monsters would become things of the past. The most grandiose sets and costumes, the most nightmarish monsters and the most lavish effects would be only a stroke of the animator's brush away. Animation would also lend the series a greater narrative flexibility than it has ever had before, allowing it to experiment with story-telling styles, such as surrealism, to a degree never before achievable -- an opportunity which can only be welcomed at a time when all indications are that the show's future development lies in it becoming more sophisticated, more radical and much less hidebound. For example, it's impossible to imagine the live-action Doctor Who ever successfully transferring to the screen stories as epic as Terrance Dicks' *Exodus*, or as ground-breaking as Paul Cornell's *Revelation*. An animated series, though, might just manage it. Animation could even be seen as the natural next step in the show's evolution, particularly if one reflects on the truth of Oliver Elmes' comment that Doctor Who is ‘like a live-action comic strip’. Certainly it's been going that way -- thinking about it, isn't it disturbingly easy to visualise most McCoy stories in animated form (especially *Greatest Show*, which would've made a superb cartoon film)?

Unfortunately, there are also pitfalls -- a great many of them. For starters, the greatest problem any animated Who is going to face -- and I suspect it's an insurmountable obstacle -- is the British belief that animation is ‘kiddies stuff’. The horrified reactions of fandom to rumours of a Hanna-Barbera Who is just one example of this prejudice. With the exception of pretentious art-house shorts -- usually produced by the Czechoslovak Film Board and featuring two paperclips and a blob of clay -- run in special seasons by Channel 4, British schedulers resolutely refuse to accept animation as a valid medium for adult entertainment -- and inevitably, after thirty years of such blinkered scheduling, their prejudices have infected their audience. This is a peculiarly British failing. Other nations seem to have no such problems : in the States, the animated Star Trek played to much the same peak-time audience as its live-action counterpart, and The Flintstones was scheduled just like any other popular sit-com, whilst many of Japanese tv's biggest hits have been animated series. But in blinkered old Britain the rule has been that ‘cartoons are for kids’, and as a result such shows have been dumped indiscrimately in the wasteland of Children's television, leading to the ridiculous situation in which a classic comedy like Top Cat -- a show as sharply characterised and deftly plotted as anything Powell has to offer today -- plays only to an audience too unsophisticated to appreciate it, and the unquestionably adult-targeted Wait Till Your Father Gets Home -- appreciated in America as a razor-sharp social and political satire -- ran in this country amidst the likes of Animal Magic and Blue Peter. Even today, and despite a brief point in the seventies when it seemed as if The Pink Panther Show might make the big break-through, the prejudice against populist animation persists. Just last year, for instance, Sky quietly hid the animated Trek in a kiddies slot despite having loudly trumpeted the purchase of it only months earlier. Such prejudice would pose a particular problem for an animated Doctor Who because it could well separate the show from its audience. After the cancellation of the live-action Planet of the Apes and The Dukes of Hazzard, those shows continued in animated form because, despite having lost most of their adult audience, they retained a sizeable following of children. Doctor Who's position is virtually an exact reversal of this -- it has lost almost all its audience amongst children, but retains an enthusiastic adult following. That following would be lost to it in the weekday Children's BBC slot which an animated Who would seem inevitably destined for. Thus although an animated series could serve the valuable function of introducing the Doctor Who concept to a generation of youngsters whom it has so far miserably failed to capture, the chances of the show gaining a sufficient audience to carry it beyond its debut season seem remote. One must also query whether the narrative and stylistic opportunities which I outlined earlier, and which are the only compelling reasons for going ahead with such a project, would or could be grasped by a Doctor Who going out in a kiddies timeslot and produced, for the first time ever, by the Children's Department. The whole appeal of doing an animated Who lies in its potential for freeing the show of its imaginative shackles -- sadly, I suspect that under the aegis of the Children's Department, the shackles would be even tighter than those binding the live-action show. Certainly it's impossible to imagine a story like Paul Cornell's *Revelation* going out at 4.30 before Newsround! In fact one has to wonder just how faithful any series produced under such circumstances could be to the true Doctor Who ethos. One of the most disturbing trends in modern television is the way in which adult concepts, such as Robocop and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, have been recreated in sanitised forms just so they can be sold to children. It would be unforgivable if this were done to Doctor Who, especially at a time when -- with Virgin's *New Adventures* -- the concept seems to be evolving towards the more mature and sophisticated approach which many fans have been advocating for a very long time.

“McCoy and Aldred's characters already possess a strangely ‘comic book’ feel”

Other problems the show will face in this new medium concern the basic approach to it. Given the temptations of unlimited spectacle which would suddenly become possible, it will require a very deft hand on the tiller to keep the series true to itself and prevent it degenerating into a mindless succession of action set-pieces and flashy laser shoot-outs. The question of who should be the lead characters also arises. Presumably Sylvester McCoy's Doctor and Sophie Aldred's Ace would pick up where they left off, and it's not hard to imagine this working rather well -- both characters already possess a strangely ‘comic book’ feel, and the thought of McCoy's Doctor restrained by the limitations of acting in voice-over only, and robbed of his repertoire of facial contortions, is a deeply satisfying one. However, am I alone in thinking that, after three tv seasons, innumerable comic strips *and* the *Timewyrm* series, those characters are reaching their limits, and that there is very little left to be said about them? McCoy and Aldred could conceivably go on doing voice-overs for an animated series for years to come, but that would open up a terrible problem of stagnation for the show. The fact is that neither Ace nor the seventh Doctor would have been around for much longer than one more season if the show had continued as a live-action production. One can argue that the arrivals of new Doctors and companions only happened in the past because of the need to explain cast changes, and thus would no longer be needed in an animated series -- if McCoy left, one could arguably maintain the character and simply recast the voice. After all, The Archers does it all the time! This temptation would be particularly strong if the producers had an especially popular interpretation of the Doctor which they did not wish to lose. It would, though, be a disastrous error. The regular changes of Doctor and companion have helped to keep the series fresh. As a vital contributing factor to the programme's longevity, the tradition should be maintained, a point which brings us to another interesting question, namely what happens when the incumbent Doctor does quit? Firstly, how many quality actors will wish to play the role in voice-over only? (I know, I know, the name Colin Baker springs to mind.) And secondly, how does one decide on the visual presentation of the new Doctor? Suppose you cast Richard O'Brien. Do you henceforth get the animators to draw the Doctor *as* Mr O'B? Food for thought ...

Given the many pitfalls, and the fact that Doctor Who's greatest failing in recent years appears to have been a difficulty in finding quality scripts, perhaps Milton Subotsky's idea of remaking the existing adventures would be a more profitable avenue to pursue. Certainly any problem of scripts would go right out the window -- the Hartnell era alone can provide twenty-nine stories, more than enough to be going on with, all of them solid and well-written stuff and all (reasonably) suitable for younger audiences. Also it has to be said that there's a great appeal in the idea of seeing scripts such as *The Keys of Marinus* or *The Dalek Invasion of Earth* exploited for their full visual potential, freed of their sixties budgetary and production limitations. The thought of *Dalek Invasion* done exactly as Terry Nation originally envisaged it, destruction of London and all, is hugely tempting, and if it's a choice between that or a safe, sanitised series of simplistic new stories aimed at kids, I'll take remakes of Hartnell stories any day.

Whatever approach is adopted if the project goes ahead, its success or failure will also depend very largely on which visual style the producers opt for. The cheap, bland, mass-produced approach of most modern animation certainly will not do -- one only has to look at the animated Star Trek, where so surprisingly good storylines and extremely accurate representations of the Enterprise and her regular crew were let down by the sheer crudity of the animation, to see that. A Doctor Who that looks like He-Man and the Masters of the Universe won't last five minutes, never mind a season. It's difficult to know what style would suit Doctor Who, but it will be a crucial point in maintaining the authentic atmosphere of the series. Personally I admit to feeling that the ‘look’ of dear old Battle of the Planets might be something to aim for, but I'm sure others will be horrified at the very idea.

In a perfect world, a move to animated production would be the best thing that ever happened to Doctor Who, liberating the concept from the strait-jacketing limitations of live-action, which it seems to have outgrown, and granting it the narrative and stylistic freedom enjoyed by the *New Adventures* books. Sadly, this is not an ideal world, and I fear the difficulties I've outlined will combine to ensure that an animated Who never comes even remotely close to achieving its potential. However, I would love to be proved wrong. If this project goes ahead, it is going to be one of the most fascinating and exciting developments in Doctor Who's long history, and I would urge all fandom to support it, to encourage those involved, and to do their utmost to see that the idea's great possibilities are fully realised, so that we and Doctor Who get the very best out of it.

TIM MUNRO

SCOOBY-DOO-BY-DOO-BY-MASTER!
THE MYSTERY MACHINE

Why *Who?*

THE CURRENT argument put forward by Doctor Who fans for the BBC's continued commitment to their series runs something along the lines of ‘it brings in more revenue than it costs to make, so it's madness not to produce it’. If money was the only governing factor then the BBC would indeed be mad not to return Doctor Who to production, but it isn't, and they're not. However, to fully understand the BBC's decisions about its programming it is necessary to take a wider look at just what it happening to broadcasting in Britain as a whole. Changes, more far-reaching than presently apparent, are going to dramatically change the face of tv in this country over the next decade.

Firstly, the new ITV franchises, which come into effect in 1993, commit the new regional incumbents to a reduced amount of public service and minority programming. This will mean more mass-audience, popularist shows that appeal to advertisers and gain high volumes of viewers. You must remember that all commercial channels exist to serve up the largest audience possible to advertisers in order to justify the price charged for space in their commercial breaks. The programming is nothing more than the lure, and the more popular the programme the larger the fee charged for space within it. On commercial grounds, lowest common denominator shows are the ones to make, and will be made in ever increasing numbers once the current restrictions forcing ITV to make public service television are relaxed.

Secondly, satellite, cable and Channel 5 will further eat into the potential BBC audience as they become more established, although some observers doubt the profitability of a fifth terrestial channel.

Thridly, the BBC's method of funding is being called into question. In the past, new technology has allowed the BBC to extend its licence income, firstly with the spread of television, and then with the advent of colour. However, as almost every household now has a television set, growth areas no longer exist. The only way to increase revenue, in a media with higher than average inflation, is to drastically increase the price of the licence and this is having political fall-out.

The BBC is locked in a constant ratings battle with ITV, but this quest for viewers is now more important than at any time since the 1950s when ITV took a very substantial lead. In order for the BBC to make a convincing argument for the continuation of its licence fee beyond its present royal charter, it must be seen to maximise its audience share. If it fails to hold its own (generally agreed to be around 40% of the prime-time share), then the Corporation will almost certainly become a subscription-only service after 1996 -- something the BBC doesn't want, but the Tory party does, for a variety of ideological and political reasons.

The government has already started its attacks on the present system for funding the BBC, including making non-payment of the licence a civil rather than criminal offence, and setting its level against the Retail Price Index, which tends to be below that of inflation in the broadcasting industry. The Conservatives have long criticised the licence as a regressive form of taxation -- everyone pays the same regardless of circumstance -- at the same time advocating the Poll Tax. But the BBC commits a second, and perhaps bigger sin in their eyes -- it pays no heed to market forces. This has put the BBC very much on the defensive at a time when money for programming is in short supply due to underfunding and ITV has taken a very substantial audience lead. Early victories are therefore important.

All these far-reaching changes have nothing to do with the demands of viewers, who when questioned have never expressed any great desire for more channels or a dislike for the tv licence fee. The motivation for change has been purely political and economic. From 1981 to 1989 advertising revenue for the ITV companies doubled and this rapid inflation resulted in the advertising lobby exerting its considerable commercial leverage for the creation of alternative access to air-time. A highly sympathetic government, intent on breaking what it saw as the restrictive practices of the established broadcasters, opened the way for a further terrestrial channel, satellite and cable. These decisions had nothing to do with the extension of viewing choice, but everything to do with the demands of advertisers.

It would not be an overstatement to claim that the BBC is locked in a battle for its survival in its current form. Therefore, money spent on programming has to be directly measurable in terms of audience figures -- something Doctor Who failed to do for the last few years of its life. Conversely, the series continues to generate income from sales and merchandising despite the lack of new product.

The BBC2 repeats may be the greatest hope for Doctor Who returning to our screens in a new series. If the re-runs gain the same sort of audience that Thunderbirds has, then a new batch of stories becomes that much more likely. Five million-plus viewers on BBC2 at six o'clock should indicate the programme's potential as an audience success given a good BBC1 scheduling.

Under these circumstances, the best role for fandom is one of ambassador and promoter rather than that of provocateur. By a strange twist of fate, Alan Yentob may end up as the unlikely saviour for Doctor Who -- we must lend him our visible support.

ANTHONY CLARK

PRIASE FOR DAVISON'S TRILOGIES

Andrew Brown, Herefordshire (21-11-91)

I've been an avid reader of DWB for a long time, and I greatly enjoyed the recent positive articles on the Davison years. My only quibble with Ian Wheeler's piece in DWB#95, and with a great many similar 'appreciations' of the Davison era that I've heard and read, is the knocking of Season 20 as being "a somewhat weaker batch of episodes" compared with the former and latter Davison seasons.

The main reason for complaint (although not mentioned by Ian Wheeler) seems to be lack of monsters. This is a shame as, for me, Season 20 contains the three most interesting and thought-provoking fifth Doctor tales, namely the Black Guardian trilogy. Unlike the majority of Davison's adventures, **Mawdryn Undead, Terminus** and **Enlightenment** do not have the Doctor pitted against monsters/villains just out to conquer and destroy. Mawdryn and the mutants simply want to find death; the real enemies in **Terminus** are the unseen, money-grabbing Terminus Incorporated, the antiquated, malfunctioning ship's computer and the Lazar's disease itself; and the Eternals are, on the whole, seeking entertainment and just plain existence rather than universal domination. Alright, so the Black Guardian is present, but only in the background until the final moments of **Enlightenment,** and even then he's mostly concerned with revenge against the Doctor.

This kind of story is rare in the history of **Doctor Who,** and to have three strong and, in my opinion, very good quality ones in a row is worthy of note. The excellent **Snakedance** adds to the strength of this season, and although **Arc of Infinity** and **The King's Demons** are fairly run-of-the-mill, they are not as embarrassing as **Time-Flight** or **Warriors of the Deep.** But I don't think it should be dismissed and labelled a bad or below par season because it lacks 'good monsters'. Don't forget that it was to have ended with a Dalek story which, due to a strike, had to be held over until the next season.

Bill Edmunds, Maine, USA (29-12-91)

I am glad to see the Davison era finally achieving the appreciation that it deserves. I have always regarded these years as being as good as any that preceded or followed them. Davison was the only actor to portray the Doctor (along with Troughton and maybe Pertwee) who always delivered a good performance. He never over-acted or sent the rôle up. Indeed, he treated it with the respect that it deserved. In addition, even the worst episodes of the Davison era were always taken seriously. There was a consistency of quality running through seasons 19-21 that I believe has rarely been equalled. Say what you will about seasons 22-26, but please don't let the weakness of some of the latter JNT years cast a shadow over the excellence of Peter Davison and his stories.

NOW THE STARS COME OUT

Stephen Trump, Upminster (6-12-91)

I read with interest Paul Daniels' criticisms of the BBC top management in today's Daily Mail where he singles out Controllers John Birt, Jonathan Powell and Alan Yentob for the boot. The fact that someone like Daniels - who has benefitted so much from the Beeb's support and promotion over the years - has spoken out speaks volumes for the gravity of the situation. I, too, am fed up with the garbage that appears with regularity on our screens; the dire 'Allo 'Allo, Ben Elton's 'new-wave' (and left-wing biased) comedy and many more programmes that, instead of being shown at peak viewing time, should be relegated to late-night slots.

The good programmes these days are few and far between it seems and yet Joe Public's preferences are ignored. Don't the BBC undertake market research? Surely if they did Mr. Daniels' comments would be more than endorsed. Although not mentioned in the article, I am sure that **Doctor Who** would be a programme considered to be suitable, in the light of the article, for prime-time viewing and the sort of exposure and promotion that Ben Elton et al regularly receive. Why don't the BBC give it a try? How many more times do they have to be told? Have they not heard of the phrase "by public demand"? I'm demanding, DWB's demanding, DWM's politely asking, and all the many fans of **Doctor Who,** the sci-fi genre etc. are demanding.

Come on, BBC, it's about time you stopped being so stubborn and delivered the goods, or if you don't then let someone else!

BELIEVE THE UNIFICATION HYPE

Rick Seger, California, USA (3-12-91)

After a somewhat unenthusiastic start, the new season of **Star Trek: The Next Generation** has finally got back on the rails with a clutch of strong, engaging episodes. For me, **The Unification** lived up to the hype with its ambitious, epic plot easily placing it in a league with other **STTNG** classics such as **Yesterday's Enterprise, Sarek, The Best of Both Worlds** and **Reunion.** It was effectively the 25th anniversary show as the Vulcans, Klingons and Romulans shared centre stage accompanied by a self-important Zackdorn and a fat, obnoxious Ferengi.

In form, it was a very adept blending of hard-hitting seriousness and almost outlandish humour. In the case of the former the dying Sarek, with his mental disciplines almost totally gone, was a truly tragic figure, and the arcane political chicanery on Romulas made for some fine drama. On the humorous side, the seedy alien bar provided some good fun as Riker roughs up a crooked Ferengi trader and Worf treats us to some 'delightful' Klingon opera. I don't know about anyone else, but I rather liked the four-handed organist!

Of course the story's greatest strength was the appearance of Spock, played with great dignity and integrity by Mr. Nimoy. To sum up, a brilliant tale all round.

INDEBTED

Neil Hogan, NSW Australia (5-12-91)

I am indebted to your magazine for bringing to my attention **Randall and Hopkirk - Deceased.** If I didn't know about it I wouldn't have bothered to set my VCR for Channel 7 at 4.15am each weekday. Now that I've discovered it I can't wait to get home from work each day to watch it. Excellent stuff, if a little dated...it adds to the charm!

WHEN PRIVATE BECOMES PUBLIC

James Guthrie, Putney SW15 (14-12-91)

Thank you for publishing my letter in DWB#97. It is encouraging to know that you are able to print criticism, if not actually understand it.

I don't object to DWB's "well-known stance towards the JNT era". Of course not. You are perfectly entitled to your opinions, as I am, I hope. I certainly do object to offensive comments about individuals. They were personal, and personal attacks do not belong in a feature that was supposed to canvas readers' views on professional ability. It was rather like someone saying they didn't like Colin Baker's acting because he was too fat. It's nonsense because the two factors bear no relation to each other.

I'll tell you why I buy DWB: a news service that is second to none; picture content that is rivalled only by The Frame; sterling interviews; thought-provoking articles... I don't expect to agree with everything (or anything!) you print, but I do appreciate there is no other forum for fans as wide-ranging as DWB. I just wish you wouldn't let yourself down as often as you do with overbearing editorial comment.

All those complaints aside, I must say how much I'm enjoying the current edition. Anthony Clark's fascinating insight into Gerry Davis' original **Return of the Cybermen** showed just how right Robert Holmes was, and I particularly like Paul Vyse's wonderful cover art. Pity about the Master photo - Anthony Ainley's portrayal has never appealed (although I'm sure he's a really nice guy!).

ED: *The fact that Pip 'n' Jane chose to parade their sycophancy towards JNT in public - not to mention their grossly unprofessional attitude on Open Air just three months later - can hardly make subsequent references to these incidents "personal attacks". DWB has only ever commented on facts available within the public domain and has never sought to pry into the privacy of others - a detestable action pioneered and mastered by this country's gutter press.*

A TERM OF ENDEARMENT?

Glyn Jones, Wigan (20-12-91)

Robert Bradley's letter in DWB#97 concerning the Doctor's relationship with "Susan Foreman" raises several interesting points. It is obvious that "Susan" was a member of the Time Lord race, but does this mean necessarily that she was the Doctor's grandchild? The answer is no. He would naturally have an affinity with her, as a fellow exile, whatever the circumstances in which they left Gallifrey. I still subscribe to the theory that the label of "grand-daughter" was given to "Susan" as a lable of convenience. I put her name in commas as it is clearly an alias, just as the Doctor and the Master adopted titles.

I would take issue with Robert over his statement that "the Doctor displayed a degree of protectiveness and affection towards Susan which he has never duplicated with any other companion". The relationship between Jon Pertwee's Doctor and Katy Manning's Jo Grant displayed a great deal of affection and the protective side of the Doctor's nature was very much in evidence.

It is inevitable that views of the first Doctor's relationship with "Susan" will have changed over the years. After all, the series was never meant to last 26 years. It is precisely because the programme has developed that anomolies in the Doctor's background have arisen. Who is to say if he had a grand-daughter or not? By the way, even is she was related in any way, she naturally addressed the Doctor as "Grandfather" without acknowledging any of his successors by the same title (**The Five Doctors**). After all, how could Davison be regarded as a grandfather figure?

STAR TREK VI OPENS WITH RECORD TAKINGS

STAR TREK VI opened on December 6th with a very strong first weekend at the box office, collecting $17.5 million - a record for a 'Trek' film.

Although $6 million behind the major Christmas success, **The Addams Family, The Undiscovered Country** grossed twenty-five per cent more that the much-hyped Speilberg production of Hook in its first weekend.

This produced the inevitable flurry of reports that another film with the original cast was being discussed at Paramount with Leonard Nimoy and Nicholas Meyer, but such talk was undoubtedly premature. Box office receipts dropped off considerably the next two weeks, leaving the film with $38.5 million of takings by the start of Christmas week. It now seems very unlikely that the film will approach the magical $100 million mark.

If the film makes a profit but is not phenomenally successful, the odds are much more likely that the next film (if there is one) will be with the cast of **The Next Generation.**

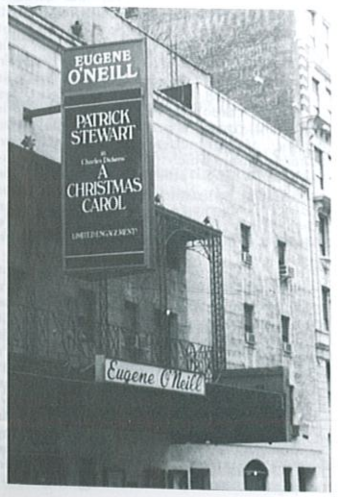
The standard industry rule of thumb is that a film must make back 2½ times what it cost in order to break even. **STVI** cost $27.5 to make.

STOP PRESS

Figures released on 30th December show that **STVI** finished an unspectacular 6th among current films, taking in an additional $7.4 million over the Christmas week, bringing the gross total up to $45.9 million - nearly $23 million outside its break even target. Update next month.

NEW 'STTNG' EPISODES

Ethics was recorded over the New Year period, in which Worf is seriously injured and faces possible paralysis. Patrick Stewart's presence in this episode is minimal due to his pre-occupation with his Broadway run of A Christmas Carol, which garnered ecstatic reviews from all the major critics and it was a virtual sellout from the earliest performances. Producer Timothy Childs is certain to exercise his option to return with the show next year - as long as Paramount remains willing to allow Stewart a break from filming **The Next Generation** to do it.



The performance is an amazing tour de force for the Royal Shakespeare Company veteran, who plays over thirty-five different characters in the two-hour show, aided only by a few pieces of furniture and his own remarkable ability to vary voice and expression. Although physically gruelling, Stewart said that the opening week on the stage in New York was the most exciting time in his life - apart from the week he was offered the rôle of Captain Picard. The actor donated profits from the sale of lobby cards and audio tapes at the theatre to a New York church providing relief to the homeless.

The second episode to film in January is called **Duelling Q's,** bringing back "you-know-who". Already filmed (besides **New Ground** - in which Worf's son returns to the ship - and **Hero Worship** which Patrick Stewart directs) are **Power Play,** in which alien fugitives take hostages in Ten Forward, **The Masterpiece Society, Violations,** in which an alien invades the minds - and memories - of crew members, forcing Beverley Crusher to relive the day she and Jean-Luc identified Jack Crusher's body, and **Conundrum,** a loss of memory story that provoked protests from the cast over its lack of cohesion (i.e. they complained that it didn't make any sense!).

Most interestingly, a story currently entitled **I, Borg** is in prepartion but its details are a closely-guarded secret...

STAR TREK SNIPPETS

FOLLOWING the recent screening of 'The Unification', a cry went up in some quarters to "Fire the director!" Apparently the epic two-parter had been "ruined" by the fact that in the closing scenes of part two - shortly after Data dispatches Commander Sela with a Vulcan nerve pinch he has picked up from Spock - the camera pans past a shiny sculpture on a desk and a stagehand's face is momentarily glimpsed in it. A typical example of the kind of fans who subject each element of 'Trek' to exacting scrutiny!

A 'STAR TREK' FAN reportedly paid £880 for Spock's pointed ears, which were auctioned off at Christies in London recently.

MARVEL'S heavy reliance on US reprints is one of the factors blamed for the closure of its 'Star Trek: The Next Generation Magazine' at issue 24.

MARVEL
No.24
STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION
MAGAZINE
FREE GIANT KLINGON POSTER!
Gates McFadden
The doctor is in!
WORF - Dark intrigue
Beyond the Neutral Zone: We Map the Final Frontier
How are Warp Speeds calculated?
NEW FOURTH SEASON PICTURES
BORG, CARDASSIAN, ROMULAN...

"It simply was not selling", senior editor John Freeman told us, "and the changeover from a fortnightly to monthly schedule did not occur soon enough".

John hopes that Marvel UK will be involved in some 'STTNG'-related project in 1992.

LASERDISC is the format on which the first five 'Star Trek' movies have just been released - in widescreen for the very first time - at $34.95 each except for I and IV at $39.95. Or you can buy the collectors boxed edition at $149.95 of which only 7000 sets have been produced. The latter is superb value and includes an excellent rendition of The Enterprise on the cover and small reproductions of the posters' artwork on the rear.

While the 'Star Trek' episodes have been available for some time on Laserdisc, they have just been joined by 'The Next Generation' episodes at $34.95 a throw. Out now is 'Encounter at Farpoint' on one disc and 'The Naked Now' and 'Code of Honour' on the second, with the rest to follow.

Laserdisc has yet to catch on in a big way in Europe, so it will be some time before 'Star Trek' becomes available on Laserdisc in the UK.

20
FOR A RACE OF SLAVES, THE ENTERPRISE IS ALL THAT STANDS BETWEEN FREEDOM AND DESTRUCTION
STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION
SPARTACUS
THE NEW NOVEL BY
T.L. MANCOUR

TITAN books publish the twentieth 'STTNG' novel in February. 'Spartacus' is the first Terry Mancour contribution to the series, priced £3.50.

RETAILERS MISS OUT ON *'THUNDERBIRDS* CHRISTMAS'

MANUFACTURERS and retail managers are seething at not having realised the true potential of 'Thunderbirds' in time to catch 1991's Christmas market.

The re-runs on BBC2 are proving to be as popular with today's generation of Transformer and Ninja Turtle-weened children as it was over a quarter of a century ago, and to such an extent that most toy shops nationwide reportedly sold out of all **Thunderbirds** product long before the first sprig of holly was sighted.

Hamleys - "the world's finest toy store" - sold out of its stock of models of Thunderbirds 1, 2, 4 and the digging machine The Mole in Mid-November: "The problem is there is no stock in the country", its marketing manager Peter Skinner said recently.

And therein lies the catch - the sole supplier of the models, which sell for around £8.15, is Amerang (see **Who** news) which imports them from **Japan,** where they have been manufactured by a company called Imai ever since the series was first shown! Imai is reportedly kicking itself for missing a potential Christmas bonanza - its schedules meant that the next big delivery of **Thunderbirds** toys didn't arrive until late January!

Amerang's sales director Robert Hales said: "It's easy to be wise after the event, but how can you tell? **Thunderbirds** has always had a cult following in this country, and we did think this year the interest would be higher because of the series being re-run, but we thought we had ordered enough to cover it. We ordered 6,000 and sat on 5,500 until the series came on. This surge of interest caught us by surprise - we have bought 10,000 of something before only to see it become an absolute egg. You tend to hedge your bets and hope for the best.

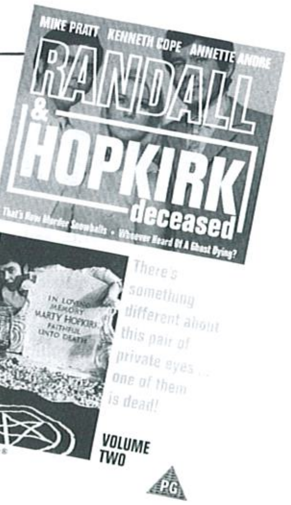
"The trouble is that once the Japanese have set a schedule, they are so disciplined they won't be budged. If we had leaned on them in June or July we could have altered the schedule, but we didn't."

*The recently-launched **Thunderbirds** comic has also been a tremendous success, with the print-runs for the first few issues proving to be severely understated. So hang on to nos. 1-10 - they could be collectors' editions before you know it!

ITC FEBRUARY VIDEO RELEASES

THE 10th of February 1992 sees the addition of six new titles to ITC's rapidly growing catalogue of classic television titles.

RANDALL & HOPKIRK (DECEASED):
VOLUME TWO ITC 1912 £10.99


MIKE PRATT KENNETH COPE ANNETTE ANDRE
RANDALL & HOPKIRK deceased
That's How Murder Snowballs • Whoever Heard Of A Ghost Dying?
IN LOVING MEMORY MARTY HOPKIRK FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH
There's something different about this pair of private eyes ... one of them is dead!
ITC
VOLUME TWO
PG

'That's How Murder Snowballs' and 'Whoever Heard of a Ghost Dying?' are the featured episodes on the second tape of Marty and Jeff's misadventures, and two of the best episodes of the series. 'That's How Murder Snowballs' contains moments of high comedy as the two detectives try to solve a theatrical murder under cover as a mind-reading act. 'Whoever Heard of a Ghost Dying?' has more sinister overtones as a medium attempts to exorcise Marty.

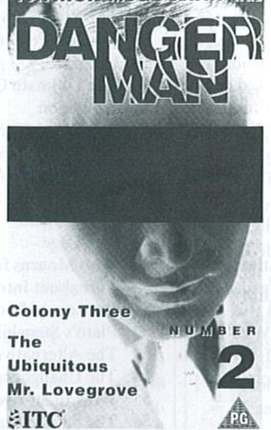
SAPPHIRE AND STEEL: ADVENTURE ONE
ITC 8120 £16.99

DAVID McCALLUM
JOANNA LUMLEY
All irregularities will be handled by the forces controlling each dimension...
Sapphire and Steel
... have been assigned.
PG
ITC
ADVENTURE ONE

SAPPHIRE & STEEL is a series that most people who saw it remember with fondness and its appeal has not diminished with time. Although long desired by many, a video release has always seemed improbable, but thanks to ITC's policy of listening to their public, many a fan's prayers have been answered. This double cassette pack contains the six episodes that make up the first SAPPHIRE & STEEL story which, having no on-screen title, is known as 'Adventure One'. This is the story that 'introduces' the characters of Sapphire (Joanna Lumley) and Steel (David McCallum) as they attempt to fight the dark forces released by an irregularity in the structure of time that uses nursery rhymes to fight them.

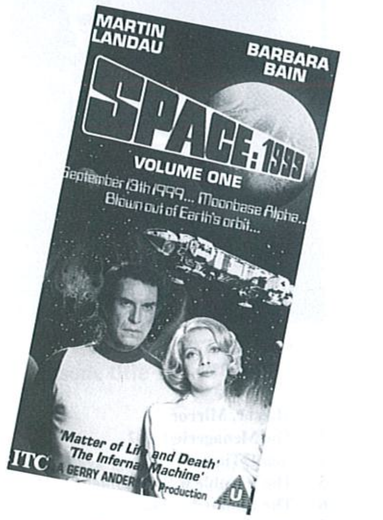
DANGER MAN: NUMBER 2
ITC 0735 £10.99

Features 'Colony Three' and 'The Ubiquitous Mr. Lovegrove'. John Drake is back again in two of the most popular black and white episodes from the sixty-minute series of DANGER MAN. 'Colony Three' centres on a replica English new-town built in Eastern Europe to train spies for work in this country. Drake is sent to infiltrate the organisation that runs the colony and expose any spies sent to this country. This episode has overtones of McGoohan's next series, THE PRISONER.



'The Ubiquitous Mr. Lovegrove' is a very strange tale indeed with Drake encountering Mr. Lovegrove at every turn. Both stories are well made and 'Colony Three' in particular is a much better example of DANGER MAN than the two colour episodes on the previous release. At least Patrick McGoohan puts something into these episodes rather than just going through the motions as he did in 'Karoshi' and 'Shinda Shima'.

SPACE 1999: VOLUME ONE
ITC 8160 £10.99


MARTIN LANDAU
BARBARA BAIN
SPACE: 1999
VOLUME ONE
September 13th 1999... Moonbase Alpha... Blown out of Earth's orbit...
'Matter of Life and Death' 'The Infernal Machine'
ITC A GERRY ANDERSON Production
U

SPACE 1999: VOLUME TWO
ITC 8161 £10.99

MARTIN LANDAU
BARBARA BAIN
SPACE: 1999
VOLUME TWO
'Dragon's Domain' 'The Testament of Arkadia'
ITC A GERRY ANDERSON Production
PG

ITC were unable to release a full set of SPACE 1999 episodes due to the previous release of eight episodes in movie format by Channel 5, so these first four episodes of the first season do not include the introductory episode 'Breakaway'. As most people are probably familiar with the basic premise of the series and the title sequence introduces the casual viewer to the Moon's departure from its Earth orbit anyway, this is no great loss.

The first tape contains two episodes typical of the first season, 'The Infernal Machine' being a better example than 'Matter of Life and Death'.

The second tape containes two of the best episodes of the entire series, 'Dragon's Domain' being the all-time classic monster episode with the added appeal that, for once, Koenig has to play second fiddle to another member of the cast. 'The Testament of Arkadia' is the usual load of psuedo-religious clap trap but done very atmospherically.

SPACE 1999 was the series in which Gerry Anderson was given the kind of money and resources he always wanted when he started making films, but he also lost the control he had with his earlier, cheaper productions. As such the series is high on glitz and special effects but lacks the humanity of UFO which is a great pity.

ITC seems to have hit the right kind of balance with its February titles with additions to previous releases and two new series. March will see the release of a WILLIAM TELL six-episode, double-cassette pack, two tapes each of THE PERSUADERS! (two episodes per tape) and FIREBALL XL5 (four episodes per tape). The release of Gerry Anderson's THE PROTECTORS and Dennis Spooner's THE CHAMPIONS are also expected soon.

ANTHONY McKAY

'TV HEAVEN'

CHANNEL 4 is appearing to emulate the shrewdness of BBC2 in scheduling classic cult '60s series in prime-time slots.

Their 13-week 'TV Heaven' season commences on February 1st comprising three hours of vintage material every Saturday evening. Each week will focus on a specific year, though in no logical order, and the first six weeks have been confirmed. Of interest to telefantasy are the following episodes:

February 1st (1967) Nothing

February 8th (1971) First episode of The Persuaders

February 15th (1963) The Avengers - November 5

February 22nd (1974) Nothing

February 29th (1968) The Prisoner - The Girl who was Death

March 7th - A '50s evening: Includes the second episode of The Adventures of Robin Hood

The rest of the line-up, which is not confirmed, comprises 1960, 1965, 1966 (featuring the **Danger Man** episode **The Paper Chase**), 1969 (featuring the **Randall & Hopkirk (Deceased)** première **My Late Lamented Friend and Partner**), 1970 and 1976.

'AVENGERS' THIS SPRING

The promised season of Avengers repeats is due to be scheduled for some time in the spring, according to Channel 4 programme planning. Thirteen episodes were struck over a year ago for transmission originally planned for April 1991, and with **November 5** included in 'TV Heaven' the season will feature the twelve remaining episodes as listed in last month's DWB.

By way of a preview to the forthcoming repeat season, a half hour **Avengers** documentary billed as "a tribute to the long-running '60s spy adventure series" was shown on Channel 4 on January 14th, and included contributions from its stars and creators. **Reviewed next issue...**

BRIEFLY...

BBC VIDEO has joined forces with high street giant Woolworths to promote February's 'Blake's 7' releases (cassettes 15 and 16). Simply purchase your tapes at Woolies and you will receive, free of charge, a limited edition A2-size poster featuring all cast members and the Liberator.

MOMI is still planning a Hammer exhibition, and we are informed that it is 80% likely to materialise next winter.

THE BBC has paid £500,000 for all of the episodes of 'The Addams Family' following the success of the film. The black and white series ran for two years in America but went on to become one of the most often-repeated shows on syndicated television. No surprise to learn that the late-'60s series will be shown shortly...on BBC2!

EALING STUDIOS, where many telefantasy shows including 'Doctor Who' were filmed, has won a reprieve from the bulldozers following an announcement from film producer David Puttnum that he is close to buying them. The threat to the much-loved buildings came to light after the BBC announced their closure and sale in November as part of their extensive cost-cutting initiative which has already seen off such bastions as Lime Grove Studios and the BBC Script Unit.

BRIAN CLEMENS was spurred into writing to The Daily Mail early in the New Year following the publication of its list of "Top 10 TV Shows".

The prolific 'Avengers' writer wrote: "I am surprised Edward Verity's list did not include 'The Avengers': still the only British show to play prime-time American network and run on two American networks; on its second cable run in the USA; sold and shown in 119 territories across the world; enjoying reruns in Spain, Germany and France, where they have opened an 'Avengers' boutique in Paris; and to be seen again on Channel 4 early this year."

THE FIFTH SERIES of 'Red Dwarf' is due to be shown between February and March.

DOUGLAS ADAMS was the subject of a recent edition of 'The South Bank Show'. Concentrating mainly on his 'Hitch-Hikers' work - for which he has a new chapter in the offing - it was apparent that his 'Doctor Who' period was one which he'd prefer to forget.

A SPRIGHTLY Peter Cushing appeared on This Morning on 12th December to promote, of all things, a techno-funk record on which he...raps! His healthy appearance both surprised and delighted many previously disturbed by reports that the acclaimed horror actor had become a recluse with a debilitating illness. Although he arrived at the Liverpool studios later than expected, he had made the long journey from his home in Essex with ease, which will certainly interest any convention organisers...

STAR TREK Series Survey Results

ON THE WHOLE, and with one exception which we'll come to later, this survey failed to produce any major surprises. With classic Trek now over twenty years old, its gems and dross have long since been decided, and it seems unlikely that there will be any major shifts in fan opinion. A few points should be made about these results, though.

Firstly, although there were approximately 170 returns, it is virtually impossible to give a definitive figure for the total votes cast, since this varied wildly between categories, and very few people voted in every section. Even in the story categories, many found it impossible to name more than three or four episodes. Most cited their insufficient knowledge of the series as a reason for this, although several stated that this problem would not have arisen in a Next Generation survey. Given that DWB's readership tends to be drawn predominantly from Doctor Who fandom, this would seem to indicate that ST:TNG has taken Who fandom by storm in a manner never achieved by its predecessor.

There were also noticeably fewer votes in the Least Favourite categories, with several voters refusing on principle in these sections. It would seem from this that Trekkers are either less willing than Doctor Who and Blake's 7 fans to acknowledge their show's off-days, or (lucky people) are genuinely happier with their series overall.

P = points; V = votes; F = firsts; S = season. See DWB 96 for notes on how the results are calculated.

Favourite story

		P	V	F	S
1	**CITY ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER**	**1189**	**144**	**65**	**1**
2	**Mirror, Mirror**	**602**	**87**	**20**	**2**
3	**The Menagerie 1 & 2**	**568**	**78**	**16**	**1**
4	**Amok Time**	**507**	**68**	**3**	**2**
5	**The Trouble with Tribbles**	**506**	**69**	**4**	**2**
6	**The Doomsday Machine**	**496**	**64**	**5**	**1**
7	**The Devil in the Dark**	**459**	**64**	**6**	**1**
8	**Balance of Terror**	**432**	**56**	**2**	**1**
9	**Space Seed**	**366**	**56**	**1**	**1**
10	**Arena**	**333**	**48**	**4**	**1**
11	Shore Leave	296	44	1	1
12	The Enemy Within	274	39	2	1
13	Where No Man Has Gone Before	260	32	3	1
14	Journey to Babel	257	42	2	2
15	The Naked Time	253	38	3	1
16	Wolf in the Fold	239	37	1	2
17	The Galileo Seven	235	39	3	1
18	The Tholian Web	230	35	2	3
19	A Piece of the Action	208	32	1	2
20	The Corbomite Maneuver	191	35	1	1
21	The Squire of Gothos	178	28	1	1
22	Assignment: Earth	163	27	1	2
23	Errand of Mercy	150	22	1	1
24	The Man Trap	148	29	2	1
25	All Our Yesterdays	148	23	-	3
26	What Are Little Girls Made Of?	142	19	2	1
27	Court Martial	141	24	-	1
28	Miri	141	22	-	1
29	Tomorrow is Yesterday	139	22	1	1
30	The Enterprise Incident	136	23	-	3
31	Charlie X	136	22	1	1
32	Day of the Dove	131	20	-	3
33	Spectre of the Gun	128	22	-	3
34	The Deadly Years	127	19	-	2
35	Operation: Annihilate!	105	16	-	1
36	This Side of Paradise	103	15	1	1
37	I, Mudd	98	14	-	2
38	The Paradise Syndrome	93	18	-	3
39	Conscience of the King	93	14	-	1
40	Catspaw	92	12	-	2
41	The Ultimate Computer	90	19	-	2
42	Obsession	87	15	-	2
43	Bread and Circuses	83	13	1	2
44	A Taste of Armageddon	82	11	1	1
45	Return of the Archons	81	11	-	1
46	The Immunity Syndrome	81	9	-	2
47	The Empath	76	13	1	3
48	The Cage	74	10	1	1
49	Who Mourns for Adonis?	73	13	1	2
50	Turnabout Intruder	73	12	-	3
51	Patterns of Force	64	9	-	2
52	Plato's Stepchildren	59	10	-	3
53	The Alternative Factor	55	8	-	1
54	The Changeling	50	9	-	2
55	Wink of an Eye	45	10	-	3
56	The Savage Curtain	41	11	-	3
57	The Gamesters of Triskelion	43	8	1	2
58	Return to Tomorrow	42	7	1	2
59	Metamorphosis	39	11	-	2
60	Dagger of the Mind	36	5	-	1
61	Whom Gods Destroy	35	10	-	3
62	For the World is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky	33	4	1	3
63	Elaan of Troyius	31	4	1	3
64	Spock's Brain	30	10	-	3
65	Is There in Truth No Beauty?	29	4	1	3
66	Requiem for Methuselah	29	7	-	3
67	Mudd's Women	26	3	-	1
68	The Cloud Minders	22	3	-	3
69	Let That Be Your Last Battlefield	21	8	-	3
70	And the Children Shall Lead	21	3	-	3
71	By Any Other Name	18	5	-	2
72	That Which Survives	18	4	-	3
73	Friday's Child	14	3	-	2
74	The Apple	12	2	-	2
75	A Private Little War	5	2	-	2
76	The Lights of Zetar	4	1	-	3
77	The Way to Eden	3	1	-	3
78	The Mark of Gideon	1	1	-	3

The Most Predictable Victory Award goes to *City on the Edge of Forever*, which romps home way ahead of its nearest rival to retain its oft-awarded crown as Best Ever Trek. Even before the votes were counted it was obvious that *City* had won by a landslide, and over-rated though it surely is, it has been on its throne a very long time and seems unlikely to ever be deposed.

Further down the chart, *Amok Time* falls lower than one might have expected, whilst *Journey to Babel* surely achieves such a high placing thanks largely to the popularity of Sarek. Quite how *The Doomsday Machine* came to beat *The Devil in the Dark* is something of a mystery, as is the popularity of *Wolf in the Fold* and the unfairly low vote for *The Cage*. One must also wonder how an incredible fourteen stories have achieved lower placings than the rightly infamous *Spock's Brain*.

Only one story received no votes at all in this category -- the Yangs/Kohms embarrassment *The Omega Glory*.

Least favourite story

		P	V	F	S
1	**SPOCK'S BRAIN**	**448**	**84**	**51**	**3**
2	**The Way to Eden**	**272**	**69**	**21**	**3**
3	**The Apple**	**163**	**40**	**10**	**2**
4	**The Omega Glory**	**143**	**44**	**5**	**2**
5	**And the Children Shall Lead**	**142**	**38**	**2**	**3**
6	Spectre of the Gun	81	22	3	3
7	The Mark of Gideon	77	24	2	3
8	The Paradise Syndrome	74	23	2	3
9	The Lights of Zetar	68	23	1	3
10	I, Mudd	20	67	1	2
11	The Cloud Minders	65	23	1	3
12	Mudd's Women	65	16	3	1
13	Plato's Stepchildren	60	20	2	3
14	Elaan of Troyius	60	18	1	3
15	Charlie X	60	15	1	1
16	The Gamesters of Triskelion	57	16	2	2
17	The Empath	56	20	-	3
18	A Piece of the Action	54	14	3	2
19	Catspaw	54	16	2	2
20	Wink of an Eye	54	20	1	3
21	The Alternative Factor	54	14	1	1
22	Miri	53	16	2	1
23	The Savage Curtain	52	17	1	3
24	Let That Be Your Last Battlefield	50	13	1	3
25	Conscience of the King	47	12	2	1
26	Who Mourns for Adonis?	43	11	-	2
27	A Private Little War	41	16	1	2
28	The Trouble With Tribbles	40	8	2	2
29	Friday's Child	39	16	1	2
30	Return of the Archons	39	14	1	1
=	Turnabout Intruder	39	14	1	3
32	Patterns of Force	34	11	2	2
33	Day of the Dove	34	9	1	3
34	For the World is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky	33	14	1	3
35	Requiem for Methuselah	31	10	1	3
36	Tomorrow is Yesterday	28	5	3	1
37	This Side of Paradise	26	8	-	1
38	Assignment: Earth	25	6	1	2
=	The Squire of Gothos	25	6	1	1
40	Metamorphosis	25	7	-	2
41	That Which Survives	23	10	1	3
42	The Man Trap	22	7	2	1
43	Bread and Circuses	21	9	1	2
44	Is There in Truth No Beauty?	21	4	1	3
45	The Galileo Seven	20	4	2	1
46	Whom Gods Destroy	20	7	1	3
47	The Enterprise Incident	19	5	1	3
48	Shore Leave	18	5	1	1
49	Court Martial	16	4	1	1
50	Amok Time	15	1	1	2
51	Arena	14	5	-	1
52	What Aare Little Girls Made Of?	13	5	-	1
53	Where No Man Has Gone Before	10	3	-	1
54	Obsession	9	3	1	2
55	The Deadly Years	9	3	-	2
56	A Taste of Armageddon	7	2	1	1
=	Operation: Annihilate!	7	2	1	1
=	All Our Yesterdays	7	2	1	3
59	Balance of Terror	7	3	-	1
=	Dagger of the Mind	7	3	-	1
61	Wolf in the Fold	7	2	-	2
62	Mirror, Mirror	6	1	1	2
63	The Ultimate Computer	6	4	-	2
64	The Tholian Web	6	3	-	3
65	The Immunity Syndrome	6	2	-	2
66	The Cage	5	2	-	1
67	The Changeling	4	2	-	2
68	Journey to Babel	4	1	-	2
69	The Enemy Within	3	2	-	1
70	The Menagerie 1 & 2	3	1	-	1
=	Errand of Mercy	3	1	-	1
=	City on the Edge of Forever	3	1	-	1
=	Return to Tomorrow	3	1	-	2
74	The Devil in the Dark	1	1	-	1
=	The Doomsday Machine	1	1	-	1
=	By Any Other Name	1	1	-	1

No surprises here either. The most derided, panned and critically roasted episode in Trek history, *Spock's Brain*, is deservedly King of the Trash Pile, and emerged as the 'winner' very early on -- likewise the cringworthy *The Way to Eden* in second place. The top ten placings are entirely predictable, although the unpopularity of *Spectre of the Gun* seems a mite unfair.

Two stories received no votes in this category -- *Space Seed* and *The Naked Time*.

Favourite regular character

		points
1	SPOCK	364
2	Kirk	242
3	McCoy	187
4	Scott	75
5	Sulu	28
6	Uhura	27
7	Chekov	19
8	Janice Rand	5
9	Christine Chapel	4

Least favourite regular character

		points
1	CHEKOV	191
2	Christine Chapel	134
3	Uhura	107
4	Sulu	86
5	Kirk	53
6	Janice Rand	48
7	McCoy	28
8	Kevin Riley	9
9	Transporter Chief Kyle	7
10	Spock	5

Whether two appearances qualifies Kevin Riley as a regular character is open to debate -- nonetheless, he did receive several votes. Otherwise, the votes in the regular character categories are much as one would expect.

Favourite regular actor

		votes
1	LEONARD NIMOY	67
2	William Shatner	38
3	DeForest Kelley	24
4	James Doohan	12
5	George Takei	2

Least favourite regular actor

		votes
1	WALTER KOENIG	38
2	Majel Barrett	23
3	William Shatner	18
4	Nichelle Nichols	7
5	James Doohan	5
=	DeForest Kelley	5
=	George Takei	5
=	Grace Lee Whitney	5
9	Bruce Hyde	2

Walter Koenig's placing here, together with Chekov's 'victory' as least favourite regular character, confirms his position as the Wesley Crusher of classic Trek. Shatner's high placing in both favourite and least favourite regular categories suggest that he is an actor one either loves or loathes, although one voter may have been closer to the truth when he stated that Shatner has an uncanny ability to be both very very good *and* very very bad as Kirk.

Favourite guest artist (male)

		votes
1	MARK LENARD	53
2	Ricardo Montalban	19
3	Roger C Carmel	9
4	William Windom	6
5	Gary Lockwood	5
6	Robert Lansing	4
7	Jeffrey Hunter	3

Least favourite guest artist (male)

		votes
1	ROGER C CARMEL	11
2	Robert Brown	9
3	Melvin Belli	8
4	Skip Homeier	6
5	William Campbell	5
6	Frank Gorshin	4
7	Ricardo Montalban	3

No competition in the favourite section -- it's a well deserved runaway victory for fandom's favourite convention guest, Mark 'Sarek' Lenard. The other places all go to some of the strongest performances in Trek history, but it's especially pleasing to see overdue recognition going to Jeffrey Hunter's forceful and impeccable portrayal of Captain Pike.

Favourite guest artist (female)

		votes
1	JOAN COLLINS	41
2	Diana Muldaur	16
3	Mariette Hartley	5
=	Jill Ireland	5
5	Sally Kellerman	4
=	Joanne Linville	4
=	Celia Lovsky	4
8	Susan Oliver	3
=	Sandra Smith	

Least favourite guest artist (female)

		votes
1	JOAN COLLINS	8
2	Diana Muldaur	6
=	Teri Garr	6
4	Sandra Smith	5
5	France Nuyen	4
=	Antoinette Bower	4
7	Kim Darby	3
=	Sarah Marshall	3
=	Sally Kellerman	3

With the same actresses taking first and second placings in both favourite and least favourite categories, it seems La Collins and Ms Muldaur fall into the love 'em or hate 'em category, although Muldaur's vote may have been inflated by Next Generation fans to whom her name conjures up the dreaded spectre of Doctor Pulaski! It's also interesting to see Sally Kellerman (Elizabeth Dehner of *Where No Man Has Gone Before*) and *Turnabout Intruder*'s Sandra Smith (the only person other than Shatner ever to play Kirk) placed in both categories. In the favourites section, *Cage*-ies will be pleased to note Susan Oliver's popularity and *Amok Timer*s will applaud the placing of Celia Lovsky aka T'Pau.

Favourite culture

		votes
1	VULCAN	41
2	Romulan	32
3	Klingon	24
4	Iotian	5
5	Talosian	4
6	Organian	3

Least favourite culture

		votes
1	KLINGON	11
2	Gideon	7
=	Vaal	7
4	Platonian	5
=	Romulan	5
6	United Federation of Planets	4
=	Space hippies	4
8	Capellan	3
=	Iotian	3
=	Kelvan	3

The placing of the Klingons might surprise some, until one recalls that Roddenberry himself expressed disatisfaction with classic Trek's portrayal of Klingon culture. More surprising is the placing of the Federation!

Favourite villain or monster

		votes
1	KLINGONS	35
2	Khan	19
3	Horta	17
4	Romulans	13
5	Gorn	11
6	Trelane	7
7	Salt vampire	6
8	Harry Mudd	5
9	James T Kirk (!)	3
=	Kor	3
=	Talosians	3

One suspects Gene Roddenberry would've been outraged at the very idea of 'monsters' in his Trek universe, and the high placing of the Horta suggests a lot of people have missed the whole point of *The Devil in the Dark*! The Klingons' predictable victory would seem to confirm Roddenberry's feeling that the original Star Trek presented them more as 'villains of the week' than as a thought-out culture.

Least favourite villain or monster

		votes
1	HARRY MUDD	18
2	Gorgan	10
3	Gorn	7
4	Lazarus	6
=	Salt vampire	6
=	Tribbles	6
7	Dr Sevrin	5
=	Mugato	5
9	Charlie X	4
=	Sylvia	4
11	Romulans	3
=	Horta	3
=	Vaal	3

The biggest surprise the survey has thrown up is surely the apparent unpopularity of Harry Mudd. His placing here, taken with Roger C Carmel's placings in other categories, suggests that the character is far from being as popular as was thought, and makes one wonder why he was brought back for a second outing!

Favourite episode title

		votes
1	FOR THE WORLD IS HOLLOW AND I HAVE TOUCHED THE SKY	38
2	City on the Edge of Forever	29
3	Where No Man Has Gone Before	8
4	The Devil in the Dark	5
=	Is There in Truth No Beauty?	5
=	The Trouble with Tribbles	5
7	Wolf in the Fold	4
8	Dagger of the Mind	3

This one was never in doubt. Just for sheer daring, *For the World is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky* was bound to win, despite the many who feel it to be the last word in pretension.

Least favourite episode title

		votes
1	SPOCK'S BRAIN	42
2	I, Mudd	11
3	For the World is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky	9
4	Assignment: Earth	5
5	Operation: Annihilate!	4
=	The Trouble with Tribbles	4
=	Elaan of Troyius	4
8	The Apple	3
=	What are Little Girls Made Of?	3
=	The Way to Eden	3
=	Miri	3

Favourite writer

		votes
1	D C FONTANA	28
2	Gene L Coon	24
3	Harlan Ellison	19
4	Robert Bloch	12
5	Gene Roddenberry	10
6	Norman Spinrad	5
7	Jerome Bixby	4
=	Paul Schneider	4
9	John D P Black	3
=	Theodore Sturgeon	3

No surprises here either -- the names here assembled have long been regarded as the cream of Star Trek's >

writers, and between them are responsible for nearly all the most popular episodes. D C Fontana's victory underlines a popularity proven whenever Trekkers are polled on their favourite writers.

	Least favourite writer	votes
1	MARGARET ARMEN	12
=	GENE RODDENBERRY	12
3	Lee Cronin	9
4	Gene L Coon	7
5	David Gerrold	6
6	Edward J Lakso	5
=	D P Harmon	5
8	Max Ehrlich	4
=	D C Fontana	4
=	Arthur Heinnemann	4
11	Jeremy Tarcher	3
=	Jerome Bixby	3
=	Don Ingalls	3
=	Stephen Kandel	3

Margaret Armen's placing is just reward for perpetrating *The Cloud Minders*, but Roddenberry's seems grossly unfair. Whilst it's true that he has several stinkers to his name, notably *The Omega Glory*, he was also responsible for some of the show's finest episodes. It should also be remembered that without his creative vision there would have been no Star Trek at all, that many of the show's earliest and best episodes were written up from his basic storylines, and above all that it was the reduction of his influence in Season 3 which led to the show going down the pan.

	Favourite season	votes
1	ONE	105
2	Two	46
3	Three	2

	Least favourite season	votes
1	THREE	139
2	Two	7
3	One	4

Again, the votes here are wholly predictable, confirming the received wisdom that Trek was at its best in its first year.

And finally, a thought from Paul Hayward of Canada, who wonders why Captain James T Kirk was given the middle name Tiberius. Was it, he asks, 'a subtle insight into his true nature -- arrogant, boorish, impulsive, quick-tempered and a womanising letch? In sum, a Federation thug.' This becomes even more interesting if one recalls that for a very long time in the latter days of his reign, Tiberius was effectively displaced by one Lucius Aelius Sejanus. Fans of I, Claudius will follow my drift ...

TIM MUNRO

Results compiled by Tim Munro, with thanks for assistance to Jonathan Hird.

STAR TREK VI MOVIE REVIEW – PAGE 22

BLAKE'S 7 Cassette 16

THERE ARE but a few things which are universally hated. Those which are tend to end up with an obligation of hatred from those who might otherwise have liked them. **The Harvest of Kairos** is such a one. Why?

We can (if we're feeling sad enough which we evidently are) look for parallels in Doctor Who, and the one that springs most immediately to mind is *Kinda*. Remember that? The story plodded along quite happily until suddenly Wham! along comes the stupid snake and buggers it all up. Well, in *Kairos* the story is likewise plodding along quite happily when Wham! along comes the killer vacuum cleaner bag and everyone falls off their chair in hysterical laughter. Now I am by no means claiming that *Kairos* is on anything like a par with *Kinda* because it isn't, but this duff special effect (and it is hideous) does seem to colour everyone's view of the story. Perhaps it is the icing on the cake, or the cowpat on the dunghill. *Kairos* is certainly an odd and less than satisfactory episode. It lacks a focus, inasmuch as the one that is identifiable is neither original nor central enough. We had seen it before in Star Trek; a commander is far too reliant on computers for advice and needs a free thinker to show him that it is possible to use one's instinct and initiative.

Jarvik, an ex-Federation captain and old acquaintance of Tarrant, claims that 'any old fool with three pursuit ships could take the Liberator' and Servalan, who has been failing because of her reliance on computer strategy, dares him to try. Unfortunately he succeeds almost immediately and so the plot has to move off in other directions. Tarrant, Avon and co. are dumped on Kairos shortly after the eponymous harvest when lots of nasty vacuum cleaner bags come out to wreak terrible vengeance on any who have touched the fabulously valuable Kairopan. This is where the problems start. Apart from the outright sexism that has been going on in the way Jarvik behaves to Servalan who is, after all, only a woman and shouldn't be expected to know what to do, Ben Steed, having pulled the neat plot trick of having the heroes lose, appears not to have worked out in advance how he can reverse this. I shall not reveal how he does, beyond that it involves an amazingly convenient abandoned lunar module and a lump of sentient rock called Sopron, which serves no other function in the story but to get the heroes out of their scrape.

Andrew Burt is Jarvik, and went on to appear in *Terminus* as one of the Vanir with several-times Who actor Scott Fredericks (who had appeared in *Weapon*), and regular Who stuntman Stuart Fell falls off a fence.

If *The Harvest of Kairos* leaves the viewer with a sick feeling inside (and please, any readers who like it do write in; perhaps we can form a *Kairos* Appreciation Society), the second episode on this tape will hopefully perk them up. Coming from the pen of script-editor Chris Boucher, without whose tender understanding Blake's 7 would have been nowhere near as good as it almost was, **The City at the Edge of the World** is remembered for three distinguishing features. Firstly it is the Vila love story; secondly, it has Colin Baker in it; and thirdly, it is the episode with the longest title, about the fitting onto the video case of which there has been much amused speculation. (It also has the distinction of having the longest plot summary in Tony Attwood's *Programme Guide*, running at over two pages.) Less obviously it is here that Avon and Cally start to build up a slightly closer than earlier rapport, which continues into the next few episodes.

There is a certain familiarity of theme, once Vila has got through the door that Herr Baker wants opened, inasmuch as there follows one of those puzzles-in-corridors routines à la *Pyramids of Mars*. At the end of it, though, Vila does at least claim the distinction of being the only one of the Liberator crew ever to obviously get his end away. Sadly, however, everything has to fall back into its original place and Kerril and Vila have to part, but not before dear old Bayban has blown the entire city sky high.

Colin Baker's performance is without a doubt the highlight of the episode. He is way way way over the top (some might say doing what he does best) but in a role that is written that way. Valentine Dyall is similarly typecast.

The one problem worth mentioning with the episode is the inconsistency in the character of Tarrant. Some people slate Tarrant left right and centre as being boring and stereotyped. At the opening here he is bullying Vila all over the place and being thoroughly obnoxious and the conflict between him and not only Avon is played up quite markedly, whereas in *Kairos* it is less obvious.

City is a fine episode not just by Season 3's standards but for Blake's 7 as a whole. It may be significant that it is Federation-free, not even having Servalan in it. That was the way the best episodes of the season went (see also *Sarcophagus* and *Ultraworld*). Food for thought?

PETER LINFORD

Blake's 7 tape 16 is released by BBC Video in February, price £10.99

GENE RODDENBERRY: A Retrospective

GENE RODDENBERRY AND MAJEL 'LWAXANA TROI) BARRETT

AS MANY have noted, it seems both tragic and fitting that Gene Roddenberry should pass away in the midst of the celebrations surrounding the 25th anniversary of the creation that made him famous. Indeed, after suffering a series of strokes that left him in a wheelchair for much of the past year, it was not certain that he would see in the anniversary, although the extent of his health problems was not generally publicised. However, there had to be great satisfaction in finally being accorded the status at Paramount that his financial contribution to the studio's coffers had long merited, and in seeing his new series achieve unprecedented popularity at the same time that his original Star Trek crew were preparing a sixth feature film based upon the adventures that began in September 1966.

Roddenberry's precise place among science fiction luminaries may be hard to describe. As a writer, he does not rank with his friends Ray Bradbury or Isaac Asimov as a great contributor to science fiction literature as such. Some even debate if Star Trek should be considered science fiction. Yet no programme or novel has had a comparable impact on American popular culture, and not just at the level of 'Beam me up Scotty' and plastic phasers. However much the paraphernalia of Star Trek may appeal, it is the basic optimism about the future of humanity and the philosophy of tolerance that became associated with the Trek universe that is the distinctive element of the Roddenberry heritage and what separates him from other successful science fiction media purveyors like Irwin Allen, whose death a few days after Roddenberry's was barely noted.

Roddenberry himself was attracted to science fiction as a means of getting his comments about current issues on television in a form that timid network executives would not recognise. He saw the genre as being equivalent to what Swift had done in his satires, or more generally as the best form for contemporary philosophising. Precisely because he had not been associated with science fiction to any degree in the past, and looked every inch the combat pilot and urban policeman that he had been, it came as a shock to many that Roddenberry abandoned his career writing for television cop shows and westerns to promote a new series idea about an idealistic future society. 'I always thought he was a junkyard dog with the heart and soul of a poet,' said Star Trek scriptwriter Edward Lasko. 'He was a big lumbering guy and it seemed very unlikely that stuff came from him.'

Although Roddenberry became quite disillusioned -- and occasionally profane -- after his experience with producing the original series for NBC, he was sufficiently schooled in the ways of network executives to promote his idea to them in the first place as a sort of Wagon Train to the stars, making an analogy to a then very popular western series featuring name guest stars in what was almost an anthology format. He suggested that budgets could be controlled for the series by having the Enterprise (although it was being called the Yorktown at this juncture!) visit planets which showed parallel Earth development, thus allowing standard sets and costumes found on the lot. He had to shop the idea around even then, getting several rejections before NBC was willing to finance a pilot film. As is well known, many changes were demanded in that original effort, *The Cage*, as well as cast changes. Eventually an entirely new pilot was shot with Leonard Nimoy as virtually the only holdover in the cast (and that was over network objections). One of the casualties of the changes was Majel Barrett, who appeared in *The Cage* as Number One, Captain Pike's first officer. Of course, she ultimately dyed her hair blonde and slipped past the network busybodies to assume the much smaller role of Christine Chapel. Barrett and Nimoy were both people Roddenberry had worked with before in his debut as a producer, the short-lived series about a young marine officer called *The Lieutenant*. When Jeffrey Hunter decided that playing Captain Pike was not his best career move, someone whom Roddenberry did not know, William Shatner, was selected to play a new captain and Spock was changed to assume the role of first officer (and acquired some of Number One's characteristics that we now think of as being distinctly Vulcan).

Star Trek debuted to mostly hostile reviews and less than stellar ratings. One early commentary in TV Guide heaped abuse on the use of a split infinitive in the opening voiceover. At that time there was nothing to suggest that '... *to boldly go*' would become one of the most famous phrases in contemporary culture. Star Trek never rated higher than 52nd in its initial run, and might have been cancelled save for the large quantity of mail that the network received from its devoted audience pleading that it be renewed. The Star Trek 'cult' had begun, although network executives accused Roddenberry of orchestrating the whole thing.

All was not sweetness and light on the sound stages either. Roddenberry was working 14 hour days as producer and was not willing to let scripts pass without his personal approval, although he had hired John Black specifically to encourage veteran science fiction authors to write for the show. Friction quickly developed as Black was promising writers that their work was respected, and then their efforts would come back completely rewritten by Roddenberry, often not for the best, in Black's opinion. Of course, part of the difficulty was that these authors were not attuned to the restrictions of network budgets and schedules, and no one could claim more insight into Roddenberry's universe than the man himself. The most famous dispute arising from this situation was with Harlan Ellison, a man famous for offending virtually everyone sooner or later. He took an inordinate amount of time to produce an unfilmable script with a wonderful story and became incensed when asked to make changes. Eventually Roddenberry felt *he* rewrote it to make *City on the Edge of Forever* the classic episode it became, and then had to sit and watch Ellison happily collect awards for it. Both complained about the incident ever after. Many other writers complained about rewrites, a pattern that continued into the new series, where Roddenberry again undertook most of the first season stories himself. This time even veterans who had worked with Roddenberry before sometimes found the process intolerable and left, as in the case of D.C. Fontana, who was originally Roddenberry's secretary when Star Trek first started, and David Gerrold, who had started his career as a very young man with the script *The Trouble with Tribbles* for the original series. Although Roddenberry became known for his quarrels with writers for both series, Gerrold at least professes no animosity about what happened. As far as he was concerned, it was Gene's universe and he had the right to say what could be done in it. Writers who could not be happy watching their work be rewritten should go and create their own universes, as he has tried to do. However, it is interesting that Gerrold has expressed interest in writing some Star Trek novels now that neither Roddenberry nor Richard Arnold are involved in the book approval process.

Although the original series survived to a second season, Roddenberry might not have had he not found a man to assume the burden of day to day production on the series. Gene L. Coon is credited by many with making Star Trek as successful as it was from the middle of the first season through his tenure into the second year. With Coon as a trusted associate, Roddenberry was able to assume a slightly more livable schedule. But when another write-in campaign was mounted to get the series renewed for a third season, he told the network that he would only actively be involved in producing the series again if it retained its favourable time slot. The series was renewed but moved to what was regarded as an impossible time slot late on Friday nights. Roddenberry felt that his integrity was at stake and carried through on his threat to set back from the third series, much to the dismay of his cast, who felt somewhat abandoned. Friction had appeared early in the cast in any case, when William Shatner became concerned that his character was losing ground to Spock. Each actor began to protect his interests in his own way, and it was not unusual for the number of lines for each in a script to be carefully counted. The rest of the cast felt that they had been left by the wayside as writing came to focus on two or three characters, leaving them with little to do. This situation carried into the film series of course, with Shatner and Nimoy maintaining the peace by getting contracts which basically require that each gets what the other gets, and DeForest Kelley being sufficiently important to command a higher salary than any of the remaining cast. The rest have been left to lament that they continue to be underutilised and their characters unexplored -- it is sobering to recall that in the official Trek world of the series and films, Uhura and Sulu don't even have first names, let along backgrounds!

Friction also developed over the years between Shatner and Roddenberry, as the actor felt he was responsible for making Captain Kirk the strong centre of the show and Roddenberry was not necessarily pleased with the means or the result. Something of his feelings on the subject came out last year in interviews marking the occasion of The Next Generation surpassing the original series in total number of episodes when Roddenberry continually stressed his pleasure that the new series had become much more of an ensemble cast than the old. In a controversial comment, he also said that whereas Captain Kirk was always basically looking for a piece of ass, Captain Picard was interested in finding and solving difficult problems. Shatner was not pleased by this comment and, like many of the original cast, has been somewhat resentful of the new series and its success. He is careful to say that Patrick Stewart 'is a wonderful actor' but 'he is not the captain'. In his view, The Next Generation is a story told by a committee, which is not as exciting as having one person in a dilemma. He was 'flabbergasted' and surely not pleased to learn that Nimoy had agreed to appear on the new series. He also likes to point out that Gene Roddenberry had very little active input on the films after *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. Majel Barrett has said that she was not in *Star Trek V* as a direct result of Shatner's wish that she not appear. She is also not in *Star Trek VI*.

Although Roddenberry was basically moved out of active involvement with the film series, he was voluntarily absent from the final year of the network run of Star Trek, which was a low point in the quality of scripts and production values. In fact, the budget for Star Trek actually decreased each year that it was in production, in contrast to what has been permitted with The Next Generation. When the show was cancelled in 1969, that should have been the end of it. But it wasn't.

The show that had been marginal on network television was endlessly re-run in syndication during the seventies and became a hit, especially with college students. Roddenberry lectured tirelessly across the country during this time on his hopes for the future of mankind. It was during this period that he truly became a 'philosopher junior grade', as he proudly called himself this year, and the ultimate cheerleader for humanity. Many students who heard him then are now lawyers, accountants and even company presidents who all consider themselves to have been enlightened by their encounter with Star Trek. Many were struck by his kindness and lack of arrogance, traits which continued to be in evidence this year. Trek novelist Jeanne Dillard had never met Roddenberry and was too shy to go up to him at a convention and introduce herself. Roddenberry wheeled his chair over to her and introduced himself instead and, to her amazement, actually listened with interest to what she had to say. Roddenberry also managed to attend the annual Humanist Association meetings last spring and took time to encourage a young man to grow up and 'make Star Trek better than I did'.

In one of his last interviews Roddenberry said 'I don't live from despair to vindication', but he had to feel great pleasure in being able to duplicate, and even surpass, the success of Star Trek with The Next Generation, confounding critics who argued that the original series had been a lucky fluke. There was still the annoying problem of the film series, over which he had little control and which frequently did not please him with its results. His hopes of regaining active involvement with *Star Trek VI* were eliminated by his declining health, however. He was much more confident about the future of The Next Generation, where he felt he had trained a production staff that would keep true to his vision while managing to astonish him with what they came up with. 'I'm contenting myself with nodding wisely where once I would have grabbed my typewriter and pounded away,' he said. He was seldom seen around the set the past two seasons. Indeed, Patrick Stewart has said that one of his regrets will always be that he had not seen Gene more than three or four times during that period. What Stewart enjoyed most about Roddenberry was his uniqueness, saying that he was a man whose opinions always came as a surprise.

Roddenberry felt that his first family had been a casualty of his work on the first Star Trek series. He married Majel Barrett in 1969 and they have a sixteen year-old son. His family has asked that contributions in his name be sent to Make-a-Wish Foundation, 12121 Wilshire Blvd. #108, Los Angeles, CA 90025, an organisation he supported which makes wishes come true for seriously ill children.

A memorial service was held for Gene Roddenberry on November 1st. Although William Shatner was not in attendance, most of the actors from both casts were there. Nichelle Nichols sang and Patrick Stewart and Whoopi Goldberg spoke about the lives Gene Roddenberry had changed, including their own. Ray Bradbury said that he was often mistaken for his friend Gene Roddenberry. 'It never bothered me because I loved him as a friend and admired him as a creator ... I don't know how much longer I can go on pretending that I'm Gene Roddenberry, now that he is gone, but I will carry the sweet burden to the end of my life.'

KATHLEEN TOTH

STAR TREK VI

THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY

ORIGINAL CREW REGAINS RESPECT IN LAST (?) ADVENTURE

IT IS UNUSUAL for any film series to reach a sixth instalment, let alone break the rule that each sequel will be less profitable and less distinguished than its predecessor.

Had the normal rules of the motion picture industry held sway, everyone should have gone home happy after the great success of **Star Trek IV** and called it a day. Given that **Star Trek V** not only took a critical pounding but lost money, **Star Trek VI** should never have been made. And it almost wasn't. The powers that be at Paramount dithered for a long time over the project, accepting and then dumping a proposal for a "young **Trek**" - set in the academy days of the original crew - once fan protest (urged on by George Takei) made itself felt. In the end it has to be said that the decision to entrust Nicholas Meyer and Leonard Nimoy with the task of reviving the big screen power of the studio's biggest money-spinner was prompted mostly by the opportunity to cash in on the 25th Anniversary of the original television series and the publicity generated by the announcement that this would be the final film for the original crew of the Enterprise.

However mundane the motivations behind it, the making of **Star Trek VI** produced two laudible by-products. One is that it gave Gene Roddenberry an added measure of recognition in what proved to be the last months of his life, and another is that it also now allows the chapter to close on Kirk and Company with much more pleasant memories than those generated by **The Final Frontier.** Although the film has perhaps been overly praised by critics who had their poison pens at the ready, only to be caught off guard by this unassuming allegory on the end of the cold war, this deliberately modest entry restores respectability to the series while not really competing in either scope or complexity with the more lavishly supported films in the series.

The priorities of both Nicholas Meyer and Paramount Studios forced numerous rewrites of the script. The studio was unwilling to risk as much money on the film as it had spent on **Star Trek V** and sliced the budget several times as a new mood of austerity hit all of Hollywood. Among the casualties were a love interest for Kirk and any new uniforms for the crew. Shooting was also scheduled in such a way as to make use of many of the sets already in existence for **The Next Generation.** For example, the engine room is virtually unaltered and the office of the President of the Federation is a redress of Ten Forward. This meant that most of the work on the film could not start until after **TNG's** season filming concluded in late April, forcing a very rushed editing and post-production process to allow release in early December. The haste sometimes shows. The editing is rather choppy and there are a number of minor continuity errors. More inexplicable is a decision to cut material out of the crucial banquet scene aboard the Enterprise in which a Klingon peace delegation is hosted by the distrustful Federation crew. Tempers flare as the fundamental antagonisms between the old enemies are set loose under the influence of too much Romulan ale. Several minutes of this key scene ended up on the cutting room floor, weakening its impact.

For his part, Meyer seemed determined to use anything he had wanted to include in **Star Trek II** but had been prevented from doing. He had wanted to call that film **The Undiscovered Country,** with the reference to death being especially fitting for a film in which Spock was killed. He got his wish this time, even though it required ignoring what Shakespeare had said in favour of referring to the future rather than death as being the undiscovered country. Meyer also introduced the character of Saavik, Spock's half-Romulan, half-Vulcan protégé in **Star Trek II.** Early drafts of **Star Trek VI** used Saavik as the character who would be revealed to be involved in a conspiracy to sabotage the peace discussion with the Klingons. When Kirstie Alley declined to return to play the rôle, the character was renamed Valeris and underwent further changes - at one time she was to be the Genesis-spawned child of Spock and Saavik, then she was to be Spock's lover, and finally she became a rather unsatisfactory cypher...someone whose career Spock had sponsored, but not a mate; a Vulcan who seems too emotional to be a true Vulcan without there being any explanation in the script for her odd behaviour.

Meyer has made it clear on numerous occasions that he has little interest in the **Star Trek** mythology per se. In **Star Trek VI** he casts aside most of the established features of the Enterprise to create a much more military and utilitarian vessel having overtones of World War II submarine warfare. This Enterprise is much darker and more confined than the ones we have grown accustomed to - even the quarters of the Captain and first officer are small and relatively bare, save for a 20th century masterpiece hanging in Spock's room. The crew seem to sleep in a barracks having racks of stacked bunks, fire extinguishers adorn the walls and the banquet is served from a gallery with old-fashioned pots and pans hanging from the ceiling, and on white china bearing the ship's name and ID number. This ship seems to belong to a different universe than the Enterprise seen in **Star Trek I** or **II.** It is an old ship due to be decommissioned and its senior staff retired in three months time.

The basic plot of **Star Trek VI** was described in an earlier DWB: The Klingon empire is hit by an economic crisis which will make the home world uninhabitable within fifty years unless resources can be diverted from the military. Sensing an historic opportunity, Sarek of Vulcan sends his son to discuss peace overtures with Chancellor Gorkon of the Klingon High Council. Captain Kirk and his crew are unexpectedly involved when Spock volunteers them to act as escorts to the Klingon delegation. Many on both sides fear the peace initiative - Kirk still holds the Klingons responsible for the death of his son and cannot bring himself to trust them, while many Klingons regard him as their greatest enemy - and war seems to be inevitable when the Enterprise appears to fire two tornadoes into the Chancellor's ship, shutting down its artificial gravity. As the Klingons float about helplessly, two assassins in Federation spacesuits and magnetic boots beam aboard and mortally wound Gorkon. Klingon General Chang blames Kirk and prepares to fire on the Enterprise until Kirk surrenders his ship and allows himself and Doctor McCoy to be taken prisoner. What follows is a race against time as Spock must solve the mystery of how the attack was staged and why the ship's computer records show that they **did** fire while a manual check of the weapons shows that all torpedoes are still aboard...and still find a way to save his friends from the punishment certain to be handed down by a Klingon court. It is this search for clues which is the least satisfactory part of the film. The mystery is never much of a puzzle and leads to endless rummaging around the ship for incriminating boots and blood stains. One surprise, however, is that Spock quotes an ancestor of his on the subject of detection and seems to claim to be a descendant of Sherlock Holmes!

The Klingon trial scenes are more imaginative, with General Chang pitted against Colonel Worf as hapless defense counsel for two men whose conviction is assured. Michael Dorn plays the grandfather of his **Next Generation** character but is given little to do. Christopher Plummer as Chang gets to entrap Kirk with evidence supplied from his own personal log demonstrating his dislike for Klingons and also makes him admit that, as Captain, he is responsible for the conduct of the crew under his command. He denounces McCoy as an incompetent drunk who was incapable of saving Gorkon's life. The only surprise is that the prisoners are not killed but sentenced to a frigid penal colony for life. Kirk and McCoy must find a way to get free of the prison's magnetic shield if Spock is to have any hope of rescuing them. They are aided by an exotic woman, Martia, who seems to be falling for that old Kirk magic, to the disgust of Doctor McCoy. But Martia is actually a shapeshifter who can assume many forms. This is one of the most impressive special effects in the film, engineered by John Berton of Industrial Light and Magic, who did similar work for **Treminator II.** It also provides one of the best laughs of the film when she/he assumes the form of Kirk himself. The real Kirk says, "I can't believe I kissed you" and the imposter replies that it must have been the fulfillment of his life's ambition.

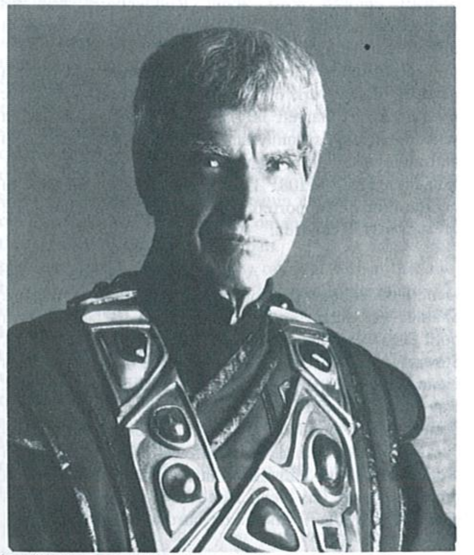
Before the true plotters can be revealed, it is necessary to not only rescue Kirk and McCoy, but the Captain has also to reveal to Spock that his protégé is involved in the plot to prevent the peace. In one of the most controversial scenes in the film, an angry Spock is urged by Kirk to get information that they need from Valeris through a forced mind-meld. But to save the reconvened peace talks, the Enterprise must battle Chang's secret weapon with the aid of the Excelsior, commanded by Captain Sulu for the past three years. Oddly enough, the Enterprise is finally victorious by using equipment that **should** have been aboard the other ship, which had been on a mission to study gaseous anomalies. Despite this glitch, the concluding space battle is an exciting sequence, far superior to the opening scene of the film when the Excelsior is hit by a subspace disturbance and tossed about like a model on a string.

The biggest surprise among the performances of William Shatner's, and for two reasons. First of all, he allowed himself to look older for this film. The infamous toupee was thinned and silvered for a Kirk nearing retirement and his face is lined. He also gives one of the most understated performances in all the films, leaving the over the top sweepstakes firmly in the hands of Christopher Plummer as the flamboyant Chang. The Klingon general not only has an eyepatch screwed into his head, he spends most of the time quoting snatches of Shakespeare to his enemies, although it is Gorkon who assures them that they have not really experienced Shakespeare until they have heard him in the Klingon original. Although this device is amusing, it is overworked and has also sparked complaints that it is terribly parochial to assume that all the galaxy will be swept up by the Bard. As for Spock, he seems to be getting quite emotional in his old age, although he seems more disturbed that he failed to detect Valeris' betrayal, then he used violence to extract information from her. The rest of the crew have less to do than usual, save for George Takei as Sulu. His moments are few but crucial and heroic.

Although there was much talk that the studio was so pleased with **Star Trek VI** after filming was completed that it called the cast back to film a new ending that would leave the possibility of another original cast film more open than it was before, the change is actually very slight, amounting to little more than the suggestion that they might take a detour on their way to space dock to retire. However, a slight change was made in Captain Kirk's final log entry. In the scripted version Captain Kirk said that "the ship and her history will shortly become the care of a new generation", but Shatner does not actually use the words "new generation" in the filmed version.

As in the past, the novelisation of the film attempts to explain away problems in the script. Valeris is given an elaborate background to explain both why she does not always behave like a Vulcan and why she distrusts the Klingons so deeply. Jeanne Dillard also found herself with the problem of somehow reconciling years of **Trek** lore about the sanctity of the Vulcan mind-meld and taboos about non-consensual mental contact with Spock's confrontation with Valeris. In the novel Valeris actually gives Spock permission to enter her mind but Dillard admits that she had not seen the filmed version when she wrote that and she believes that the decision to play it the way it appears in the film was made on the day of shooting. She does not know how she would have written the same scene for the novel if she had seen it first. She also provided a subplot reuniting Kirk and Carol Marcus which was not in the film, although Marcus was included in some early versions of the script but chiefly as a reminder to Kirk of the fate of their son. However, she had a conversation with script co-writer Denny Martin Flinn in which he said he thought that Kirk and Marcus would probably reconcile after his retirement - she chose to accelerate that process.

KATHLEEN TOTH



Top(left to right): Michael(Klingon Defense Attorney Worf)Dorn, Christopher(General Chang)Plummer, DeForest(Dr. Leonard 'Bones' McCoy)Kelley, William(Captain James T. Kirk)Shatner; Centre: Nicholas Meyer; Below(left to right): Mark(Ambassador Sarek)Lenard, Iman(Martia), Michael(Worf)Dorn. Photographs (C) 1991 by Paramount Pictures.

TELEFANTASY ON . . . 1!

THERE IS a widespread feeling in fandom these days that the controller of BBC1, Jonathan Powell, is generally unsympathetic towards telefantasy, and that there would be more chance of a Soviet side in the next World Cup than a new science-fiction series on BBC1. Which is strange, because I've just finished watching the final part of a new six-part SF series, and it was most certainly on BBC1.

The reason that very few people have noticed the appearance of *Dark Season*, of course, is because it's a 'kids show', scheduled on Children's BBC at 4.35pm (with a Sunday morning repeat on BBC2). Peak-time for children but the death slot for the rest of us, which is a shame as it probably beats anything else on prime-time television hands down.

Set in a British school in the present day, it is nonetheless a futuristic thriller, in many ways the descendent of such past classics as *The Changes* or *Timeslip*. The main character is an anti-heroine called Marcie (*Victoria Lambert*), a girl in her mid-teens who seems strangely out of place amongst her classmates. It's not necessarily that she knows more than she should, just that she asks the right questions. And any resemblance to another (supposedly) children's tv series is purely coincidental.

Marcie has two stooges, Reet and Thomas (*Kate Winslet* and *Ben Chandler*), whose job it is to get into scrapes, ask obvious questions so that Marcie can explain the plot, and fall over and twist their ankles. As I said, any resemblance to another SF tv series is purely coincidental. Completing the cast is a tame school teacher (*Brigit Forsyth*) who doesn't really understand what's going on but is a jolly good sport, for a teacher, and performs useful functions such as driving our teenage heroes to wherever it is that a dastardly world-destroying finale is to happen (oh, for a jaunting belt!).

The six episodes are split into two three-part stories, although the pair are (ultimately) connected. The first story concerns the evil Mr Eldritch (*Grant Parsons*), head of Abyss Computers, who tries to take over the nation's children by distributing free computers (I was always a bit wary of Nintendo ...). Of course, Marcie is suspicious of this, especially when one of her classmates starts glowing bright yellow, and sets out to uncover a fiendish plot involving computer viruses, mad scientists and villains in dark glasses.

The second story stars Jaqueline Pearce once again playing a fascist meglomaniac, this time as a supposed archeologist digging up the school playing fields. It turns out that she and her Aryan cronies are searching for the Behemoth, which is something pretty spectacular but I'd better not say what in case you want to catch it on the repeat. Perhaps even more than the first story, this is an exciting, frantically paced story, in the vein of Who classics such as *The Curse of Fenric* or *Remembrance of the Daleks*. It also features a wonderful one-liner from Marcie, escaping from the Nazis in the most traditional manner: 'A ventilation shaft? Marvellous -- I'm a cliché!'

I hesitate to label *Dark Season* a *Tomorrow People* for the nineties, because that might give the impression that it's a laughably ropey cheap series with little attention paid to script, characterisation or effects, and that it certainly isn't. But in many ways it is the heir to that programme's audience, treating children as the main characters in an unpatronising way not always seen on children's tv. Perhaps the best way to describe it is as everything that *Doctor Who* of the last couple of years has been trying to be. Fast-paced, exciting, complex but not incomprehensible, humourous, very well made, faultless effects, well-acted even : if this is the natural successor to *Doctor Who*, then I for one am not anxious for the older series' return.

DAVID GIBBS

(L to R) Ben Chandler as Thomas, Kate Winslet as Reet, Jacqueline Pearce as Miss Pendragon and Martina Berne as Inga from episode 6. Photo (C) BBC

DARK SEASON

Episode Guide

BBC1 stereo -- 6 x 25 minutes

Written by Russell T Davies
Directed by Colin Cant

Episode One *14th November 1991*
Only Marcie can sense that there is something wrong.

Episode Two *21st November 1991*
Tonight the children will go home. And they will turn to the machine. And the machine will embrace them.

Episode Three *28th November 1991*
The pattern is almost complete. Marcie and Mr Eldritch perform the final step of the dance.

Marcie	Victoria Lambert
Reet	Kate Winslet
Thomas	Ben Chandler
Miss Maitland	Brigit Forsyth
Dr Osley	Tim Barker
Olivia	Samantha Cahill
Mrs Polzinski	Rosalie Crutchley
Mr Polzinski	Cyril Shaps
Mr Eldritch	Grant Parsons

Episode Four *5th December 1991*
It's the end of the century, the end of a whole thousand years. Powerful times. A time for things to be wrong.

Episode Five *12th December 1991*
Legends are safe and sound in the past, but the things man has made with his own hands in the 20th century are the real monsters.

Episode Six *19th December 1991*
This time the world can end. This time the madness has a face and a voice, and its name is Behemoth.

Inga	Martina Berne
Behemoth	Marsha Fitzalan
Miss Pendragon	Jaqueline Pearce

Book : *Dark Season* by Russell T Davies, price £4.99.

AND OVER ON BBC2 . . .

1995 -- Do you know where your Quantum Physicist is?
1991 -- He's on the cutting room floor.

WHILE BBC1 has been the butt of constant criticism this year, from telefantasy fans and public alike, BBC2 has been basking in a warm glow of praise. The public are certainly happy, giving the channel a consistent 10% audience share (a point or two up on last year), due in part to the great success of the many telefantasy series the channel's been screening. And while the fans (of course) have their grumbles, the pros have greatly outweighed the cons. After all, it's difficult to get too annoyed at the mutilation of The Night Stalker's superb title sequence (the atmospheric opening to which has yet to be shown) when you're delighted to be seeing it at all, and with the cricket season over, Star Trek: The Next Generation should be secure for a few months yet. They're even running it in order now, and haven't cut an episode since The Icarus Factor (though The High Ground will be lucky to escape unscathed). Add to this Twin Peaks, Thunderbirds and the marvellous news about the Doctor Who repeats, and it's difficult to believe that Alan Yentob and Jonathan Powell work for the same organisation.

However ... It was irritating when the second season of Quantum Leap was postponed last year, but no one really minded as it was done to allow the swift return of Twin Peaks. And we could rest assured that when it did return it would be shown complete, and in order, because each episode led directly into the next one. How naive we were ...

BBC2 are in fact running Quantum Leap out of order, re-editing the teaser from one episode on to the end of another so as to disguise this. And, more worryingly, recent reports have suggested that several episodes will not be shown at all, as BBC2 have apparently said that they intend to screen only the stronger episodes.

Now, it could be argued that the BBC does have the right to decide that something isn't worth screening, however many millions might want to watch it. BBC2 is, after all, the BBC's cultural, minority interest channel. It's not supposed to be governed by the ratings, and it does have a reputation to maintain. (This is presumably why it recently screened a repeat of the quiz show Trivial Pursuit.) But there's another side to this incident -- the financial side.

Programmes are offered to tv stations in syndication packages. When a station buys a package, it gets the rights to screen a series a certain number of times over a certain period, and they make the same payment whether they exercise that right *or not*.

It's possible, of course, that the BBC have managed to negotiate a special deal and will get a refund for any episodes they don't run. Possible, but unlikely. Syndicators prefer to use standard contracts, and are unwilling to alter them because of legal costs. (One result of this is that a few Twilight Zone episodes which weren't available for legal reasons when the syndication packages were put together remain excluded to this day, and haven't been seen for almost thirty years.) But even if they have, we're still paying so that they can 'protect' us form these 'weaker' episodes. It costs money to hire an edit suite and operator, and even if the BBC's own facilities were used, there's still an opportunity cost. Any time they've spent re-editing Quantum Leap could have been used far more productively.

BBC2 has now gone back and screened all the episodes it's ommitted so far. Hopefully this means that it'll run the rest of season two complete and in order in the new year, limiting the size of the blot on its record. But if not, then the Doctor Who fan consortium might like to turn its gaze to Quantum Leap. A central plank of its case against the Beeb is that the corporation have a duty to manage licence revenue efficiently. Wasting resources so as to deprive five million viewers of episodes they wish to see could hardly be called efficiency.

ANTHONY BROWN